

IDEOLOGICAL RHETORIC: SYSTEMIC ARGUMENTS ON WAR AND PEACE  
IN HIGH SCHOOL AMERICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

By

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE COUNCIL OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA  
1973

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For Susan  
For her years of patience

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Always, at the conclusion of a graduate career, there is more assistance and guidance to be acknowledged than there is space available for such a purpose. Such is my predicament at this writing. I apologize in advance to those many people who are omitted from this necessarily brief list.

I would be remiss in my acknowledgments were I not to begin with two special notes of gratitude. First, I thank Professor Merwyn A. Hayes, of Wake Forest University, whose influence and friendship began to convince me that my diverse academic interests could best be amalgamated in the field of speech, specifically by studying rhetorical theory, rhetorical criticism, and public address. Second, I thank Professor Michael C. McGee, of Memphis State University. While teaching at the University of Alabama, Professor McGee introduced me to the broad concept of ideological rhetoric. His teaching and criticism strongly influenced my conceiving of this study. The logistical problems of commuting between Memphis, Tennessee, and Gainesville, Florida, finally forced him to relinquish his role as an active member of my committee. His continuing, long-distance, criticism has been very helpful during the writing of the study.

Members of my supervisory committee--Professors Ronald H. Carpenter, Donald E. Williams, G. Paul Moore, and Anthony J. Clark of the University of Florida Department of Speech, and Marilyn B. Zweig of the University of Florida Department of Philosophy--gave willingly of their time and critical abilities. Professor Williams was especially helpful in directing the early stages of the study. Professor Carpenter was a creative and rigorous chairman of the committee. At a time when so many accept and seem even to encourage academic mediocrity as a norm, it was constantly encouraging and sometimes painfully stimulating to work under a scholar who demands academic excellence for himself and for his students. Professor Carpenter demanded of me a constant questioning, analytical, and productive attitude. Without his astute criticism and friendly pressure, the study might well have gone astray..

Because of the need to consult numerous other sources in the process of developing the bibliography for this study, somewhat excessive demands were made on the staff of the University of Florida libraries. Ray Jones, of the reference department, was particularly helpful in identifying sources which could be of help. Also, Sherman L. Butler, of the inter-library loan department, was relentless in tracking down and obtaining some rather obscure studies.

Since the study transcended the traditional scope of the field of speech, members of other departments were called

on for assistance beyond that offered by my committee. Professors John Mahon of the Department of History, Kenneth McGill of the Department of Philosophy, and David Conradt of the Department of Political Science were all quite helpful in directing me to sources with which I was not familiar. In addition, Professors Lyle McAlister of the Department of History and Betty Ellis of the College of Education read and offered useful criticism on parts of the study.

For their constant assistance and loving encouragement, I am extremely grateful to both my families. And to my wife, Susan, goes my most profound gratitude. She served as proofreader and editor, as middle-of-the-night sounding board and readily available critic, as unpaid research assistant and relief typist, and as crying towel during the inevitable dark periods. Most of all, she, above all others, understands what it means for me to have completed this degree and appreciates what I attempted to do in this study.

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December, 1973

Chairman: Ronald H. Carpenter  
Major Department: Speech

The situationally-unbound rhetoric of ideology and the symbolic movement of that rhetoric are the focuses of this study. Ideology permeates the United States, just as it does all societies. Furthermore, in order to help perpetuate itself, ideology utilizes rhetoric to convey its positions to the populace. The author identified the primary rhetorical tool of ideology and designated it systemic argument. Systemic argument was defined as an assertion of putative fact which functions as a justification for action(s) taken or positions held on the part of the social structure. Such an argument is addressed to the public at large and is intended to instruct the populace as to what action and/or attitude in the situation being considered is most in keeping with the articles of ideology.

In order to keep the study tightly focused, the investigation was limited to the appearance in high school American

history textbooks of arguments for and against American entry into and withdrawal from seven major wars in which the United States has been involved: the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. It was clearly established that such textbooks do play a role in the perpetuation of ideology by presenting the ideological interpretation of United States history. Thus, history textbooks could be treated as rhetorical documents for purposes of the study. A list was developed of the most widely used high school American history textbooks from 1920 to 1969. Selected at random from that list were fifty textbooks, ten per decade, to be surveyed in identifying the arguments.

The completed survey produced fourteen systemic arguments favoring American entry into wars, five arguments opposing American entry, two arguments for American withdrawal from wars (one of which was unique to the War of 1812), and no arguments against withdrawing from wars. Subsequent analysis of the rhetorical data produced the following results. (1) The fourteen systemic arguments favoring American entry into wars constitute those articles of the American ideology which justify war. They were used in a high percentage of surveyed textbooks across time and across wars. The consistency across wars was even more marked when

similar systemic arguments were grouped into categories.

(2) The systemic arguments tended to repeat parts of Presidential war messages as factual explanations of the wars

rather than as patriotic rallying calls. (3) The arguments

opposing American entry into wars were not systemic arguments.

(4) The inconsistent and infrequent use of opposition argu-

ments, relative to the use of systemic arguments, supported

the observation of unwillingness on the part of textbook

authors to give equal treatment to opposition arguments.

(5) The tone of the authors indicated support for the

ideological interpretation of American entry into wars and

the already noted unwillingness to give equal treatment to

opposition arguments. (6) Authors omitted significant con-

tributory factors cited by the definitive war histories and

misrepresented other factors, thus creating an incomplete and

ideologically slanted picture of reality. (7) Two kinds of

symbolic movement were defined. Both were observed in the

surveyed rhetorical documents. Rectilinear movement occurs

when there is a change of arguments or a change in the use of

a particular argument across time or across wars. Helical

movement occurs when there is recurrence of arguments across

time or across wars. Generally, there was more helical move-

ment of systemic arguments and more rectilinear movement of

opposition arguments. Both movement patterns provided subtle

support of the ideological position and negation of the impact

of opposition arguments.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

- I. The Need to Transcend Situational Limitations
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  - B. Griffin Extended the Scope of Rhetorical Studies
  - C. Extending Movement Theory Beyond Situational Limitations
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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter will identify and justify the need for this study, discuss the theoretical foundations involved, identify sources of investigation, and specify the methodology to be employed in carrying out the study. Specifically, this introduction will develop the following topics: the need to transcend situational limitations in rhetorical studies, the need to look at "other" rhetorical forms, the importance and timeliness of focusing on war and peace, the methodological approach to be used, and the contribution to be made by this study.

This study will focus on rhetoric which transcends situational limitations. Such rhetoric may form the persuasive underpinnings for the time- and situationally-bound rhetoric which is already the subject of so many studies. It is hoped that this study will supplement the work already being done in the realm of rhetoric which is situationally-unbound.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>One very interesting example is the unpublished paper entitled "The Idea of a Macro-Rhetoric," by Michael C. McGee. McGee suggests that too much effort is spent in the field of speech-communication on studies of particular men, speeches, speech situations, and movements and that not enough effort

In common usage in the United States, ideology is a pejorative term. In fact, however, it is a neutral term which simply names a collection of ideas, beliefs, and values which a society uses to guide and to justify its policies and actions. The society also attempts to perpetuate its ideology. This dissertation is a study of the rhetoric used for such perpetuation of ideology. Because the concept of ideology is so central to this study, Chapter Two will be devoted solely to defining and describing ideology.

#### The Need to Transcend Situational Limitations

During the winter and spring of 1970, the Speech Communication Association sponsored the National Developmental Project of Rhetoric. Bitzer and Black explain the purpose of that project's two main conferences as being to identify some problems that rhetoric is facing and might have to face in the future and to make some recommendations about how to resolve these problems.

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is devoted to defining the relationship between "public values" and men in society. He is developing the concept of macro-rhetoric in an attempt to deal in part with the kind of situationally-unbound rhetoric focused on by this study. Although the prefix macro is not unique to rhetoric, McGee is using the term to stress his emphasis on public address in its broadest possible sense of being the kind of rhetoric which is addressed to the public at large, is intimately related to the value systems of the society which gave it birth, and is identifiable in rhetorical documents such as newspapers, pamphlets, policy statements, etc.



At the Project's two major conferences, scholars from several fields considered rhetoric's past and future, identified the problems in contemporary life which require applications of rhetorical concepts and methods, and recommended lines of research and educational programs needed to bring an effective rhetoric into relation to current and future needs.<sup>2</sup>

Members of the Committee on the Scope of Rhetoric and the Place of Rhetorical Studies in Higher Education expressed their desire that scholars be encouraged to pursue rhetorical studies beyond the normal range of investigation.

The conferees encourage that the phrase "rhetorical studies" be understood to include any human transaction in which symbols and/or systems of symbols influence values, attitudes, beliefs, and actions; they encourage individuals and groups to conduct investigations and publish findings dealing with many different kinds of such transactions.<sup>3</sup>

It is in response to that recommendation and others calling for broadening the scope of rhetoric that this study is being written.

### Situational Emphasis Is the Norm

Whatever differences they may have, most rhetorical studies tend to share a situational orientation. This observation is not an indictment, but a statement of fact.

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<sup>2</sup>Lloyd F. Bitzer and Edwin Black, eds., The Prospect of Rhetoric (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), p. v. When referred to in the body of this study, these conferences will be called by their popular name, "the Wingspread Conference."

<sup>3</sup>Douglas Ehninger et al., "Report of the Committee on the Scope of Rhetoric and the Place of Rhetorical Studies in Higher Education," in The Prospect of Rhetoric, ed. by Lloyd F. Bitzer and Edwin Black (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), pp. 214-215.

Rhetorical studies tend to focus on symbolic behavior within the confines of a particular social context or as an event or even as part of a historical movement which tends to establish its own boundaries and make of itself a situation. While the arguments for bounding rhetoric are widespread and highly respectable in academic circles they are also indicative of the fact that the field of speech-communication has not yet explored fully symbolic behavior which is not situationally-bound.

Emphasis on situationally-bound rhetoric has become the norm in the field of speech-communication, and that is perhaps as it ought to be. But, such emphasis tends to ignore the seemingly obvious fact that men in society are influenced by rhetoric which tends to permeate their lives, to be constant, and to influence their beliefs and behavior by subtly, but also continuously, asserting the truth of seemingly factual statements. Thus, one's behavior, attitudes, and beliefs may be changed not so much by being persuaded within the confines of a situation as by merely absorbing the claims of a particular line of argument over a period of time, without regard for situational limitations. In this sense, the very environment or social class in which one lives may be rhetorical. It is rhetoric in this broader sense that needs to be studied more than it has been, so that fuller understanding might be gained of the way situationally-unbound



rhetoric is used and judgments might be made about its potential for influence on those exposed to it.<sup>4</sup>

One reason rhetorical critics and theorists have been bound to situations for so long is that leading scholars in the field of speech-communication have tended to emphasize that situations are the core of rhetorical studies. In their classic treatise, Speech Criticism, for example, Thonssen and Baird indicated that the speech situation is the proper object of study for all critics. They defined speech situation as "a complex social relationship in which a speaker attempts to secure a particular response from a group of listeners," and they indicated that such a situation "is severely controlled by time limitations."<sup>5</sup> While this approach is twenty-five years old, it is unchanged in the Thonssen, Baird, and Braden revised edition which remains speaker- and situation-oriented.<sup>6</sup> Their approach continues to influence scholars in the field of speech-communication.

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<sup>4</sup>As should be obvious, no rhetoric is entirely either situationally-bound or situationally-unbound. Rather, there is a continuum along which various instances and types of rhetoric may be placed. Some will be more bound than others and some will be more nearly unbound than others. For purposes of this study, rhetoric which is primarily limited in scope will be called situationally-bound rhetoric and that rhetoric which is primarily unbound by situation and/or time factors will be called situationally-unbound rhetoric.

<sup>5</sup>Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1948), pp. 6-7.

<sup>6</sup>Lester Thonssen, A. Craig Baird, and Waldo W. Braden, Speech Criticism (2nd ed.; New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1970), pp. 7-8.

Even currently exciting "new" approaches in the discipline tend to reiterate the perspective of Thonssen and Baird. In one of the more widely read essays of recent years, Bitzer asserts that "so controlling is the situation that we should consider it the very ground of rhetorical activity, whether that activity is primitive and productive of a simple utterance or artistic and productive of the Gettysburg Address."<sup>7</sup> Thus, even some thinkers who are influencing current trends of rhetorical scholarship are interested more in limited than in situationally-unbound rhetoric.

The problem may have something to do with the fact that many rhetorical scholars tend to function more as critics than as theorists. The difference between a theorist and a critic is adequately described by Brockriede's statement that "the theorist tends to be interested in generalizations at the highest level of abstraction he can achieve, whereas participants and critics tend to be interested in making decisions or judgments about one very particular and unique act."<sup>8</sup> Of course, there is a great need for rhetorical critics. By functioning primarily as critics, however, rhetorical scholars may cut themselves off from the possibility of transcending that rhetoric which is situationally-bound.

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<sup>7</sup> Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric, I (Winter, 1968), 4.

<sup>8</sup> Wayne E. Brockriede, "Dimensions of the Concept of Rhetoric," Quarterly Journal of Speech, LIV (February, 1968), 12.

Having become caught up in specific, limited instances of rhetoric, most scholars begin to praise specificity and condemn generalizations. Thus, it is possible to indict rhetorical scholars who so limit themselves in much the same tone used by Frye when he noted that "it is all very well for Blake to say that to generalize is to be an idiot, but when we find ourselves in the cultural situation of savages who have words for ash and willow but no word for tree, we wonder if there is not such a thing as being too deficient in the capacity to generalize."<sup>9</sup> Most rhetorical scholars, it would seem, have been interested in the ash and willow of criticism. This study will attempt to focus its attention from the perspective of the entire forest in which those species grow.

#### Griffin Extended the Scope of Rhetorical Studies

While it is true that some scholars have extended the scope of rhetorical studies, it is also true that they have generally remained within the realm of situationally-bound rhetoric. Griffin, for example, stressed the importance of studying the rhetoric of historical movements. His idea is full of possibilities for transcending situation in rhetorical studies. The idea has not yet reached its potential, however, in part because Griffin indicated that "to study a movement is to study a progress, a rhetorical striving, a

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<sup>9</sup>Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 13.

becoming. It is a progress from stasis to stasis; for both the origins and 'the objectives of a movement are motionless.' They begin in the stasis of indecision, and they end in the stasis of 'decision preserved in.'"<sup>10</sup> The word progress and the phrase "progress from stasis to stasis" present problems, for Griffin wants to study the rhetoric within the confines of an identifiable situation.

The student's task, according to Griffin, is to isolate a rhetorical movement.

The student's task is to isolate the rhetorical movement within the matrix of the historical movement: the rhetorical movement is the focus of his study. It is to be isolated, analyzed, evaluated, and described, so that he can say, for the particular historical movement which he investigates: this was the pattern of public discussion, the configuration of discourse, the physiognomy of persuasion.<sup>11</sup>

Obviously, Griffin is interested in studying movements for which there is a definite beginning and end which can be described along with easily discernible periods within the movement itself. Therein lies the problem. With the concept he introduced when he began writing about and encouraging movement studies, the studies as Griffin describes them must, of necessity, be situation- and time-bound and must continue in the vein of all studies that have gone before them.

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<sup>10</sup> Leland M. Griffin, "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," in Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke, ed. by William Howard Rueckert (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), p. 461.

<sup>11</sup> Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (April, 1952), 185.

### Extending Movement Theory Beyond Situational Limitations

By his own description, Griffin is interested in the rhetoric of historical movements. The "rhetorical movements" he sees accompanying those periods of history are identified by defining the patterns which speeches fall into within a historical movement. It may be, however, that within the realm of situationally-unbound rhetoric, there exist purely "rhetorical" movements which are not linked to historical or social mass movements, but are identifiable primarily because the words, phrases, and arguments used to discuss particular topics within a society may change as the society refines and revises its rhetorical approach to those topics.

Such movements may be helical or rectilinear in nature. If the arguments tend to recur over a period of time, the movement is helical; as the topics reappear, the same basic arguments are revived to deal with them. If, on the other hand, there tends to be no recurrence of arguments, but a simple change of arguments across time, then the movement is rectilinear. The changing arguments indicate that the society producing those arguments has changed its approach to the recurring topic. Rectilinear movement does not necessarily indicate that the society has improved, but simply that it has changed its rhetorical strategies concerning a particular topic.



Because there need be no accompanying social and historical movement to aid in tracing patterns of movement in rhetoric, to apply Griffin's tools to situationally-unbound rhetoric may be totally useless. It may be that those changes which occur are within the rhetoric used by society and that they are not a part of actions taken by various political and/or social groups within that society. Finally, since Griffin has already defined the term "rhetorical movement" in another way, it will be better to refer to helical and rectilinear patterns of movement as "symbolic movements."

### The Need to Study "Other" Rhetorical Forms

#### Investigating Ideological Rhetoric

To look beyond situationally-bound rhetoric as a legitimate object of study, it is necessary to look at forms of rhetoric other than the usual ones considered by those scholars primarily, or solely, interested in the narrow scope of rhetorical studies. Although the appropriate definitional matters will be taken up in Chapter Two, it is necessary at this point to indicate that the situationally-unbound rhetoric which will be considered by this study is the rhetoric of ideology. As Drucker indicates, ideology is the theoretical basis for a system's doing whatever it wants or is going to do in any event.<sup>12</sup> So, the relationship

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<sup>12</sup>H. M. Drucker, "Marx's Concept of Ideology," Philosophy, XLVII (April, 1972), 154.

between ideology and rhetoric does exist. There is a need for that relationship to be explored from a rhetorical framework, as long as that framework is an extension of the perspective of situationally-unbound rhetoric and agrees with Bryant's broad, encompassing view that "rhetoric is primarily concerned with the relations of ideas to the thoughts, feelings, motives, and behavior of men."<sup>13</sup>

### History Textbooks as Rhetorical Documents

The "other" forms to be utilized as rhetorical documents are textbooks from American history courses, on the high school level. This choice is an appropriate result of the decision to study the relationship between rhetoric and ideology. Not only are high school American history textbooks tools of education, but they also have rhetorical functions which deserve further investigation and evaluation.

If ideology is to survive or be reinforced in a society, it must be perpetuated. The time to teach an ideology to a people is when they are young, not only because that is when they are most impressionable, but also because, as Draves indicates, in this country at least, "it must be remembered that for the majority of students, high school

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<sup>13</sup> Donald C. Bryant, "Rhetoric: Its Function and Scope," in The Province of Rhetoric, ed. by Joseph Schwartz and John A. Ryenga (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1965), p. 22. This article originally appeared in the Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXIX (December, 1953), 401-424.

is the end of formal education."<sup>14</sup> Thus, high school American history textbooks can be used as the primary rhetorical documents of the study if it is understood that they function in part to perpetuate the ideology of a society by telling the story of a nation.

By treating textbooks as rhetorical documents, the study may provide much needed insight not only into rhetorical aspects of American history textbooks, but also into the use of systemic arguments by social systems to perpetuate their own ideologies and popular mythologies. In addition, by treating textbooks as rhetorical documents, this study voices agreement with Simons' statement that "among the most exciting trends in rhetoric today is the application of tools and yardsticks of rhetorical criticism to non-obvious forms of persuasion, and, in particular, to the rhetoric of academic discourse."<sup>15</sup> In a similar vein, Ehninger and his colleagues call for research in "the theory and practice of forms of communication which have not been investigated as thoroughly as public address."<sup>16</sup> By isolating textbooks as examples conveying situationally-unbound rhetoric, it is possible to carry out such research in this study.

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<sup>14</sup>David D. Draves, "What's Wrong With the Teaching of History in the High School?" The Social Studies, LVI (March, 1965), 106.

<sup>15</sup>Herbert W. Simons, "Persuasion in Social Conflict: A Critique of Prevailing Conceptions and a Framework for Future Research." Speech Monographs, XXXIX (November, 1972), 240-241.

<sup>16</sup>Ehninger et al., p. 217.



If textbooks seem like an unusual form of rhetoric, it should be remembered that situationally-unbound rhetoric does not take the form of speeches which may be fully investigated by applying various tests of their effectiveness, by subjecting them to neo-Aristotelian critical grids, or by using other convenient devices such as Burke's dramatic pentad to help understand the speaker-audience-message relationship. Rather, situationally-unbound rhetoric is ongoing and pervasive within a society and might best be given voice by textbooks which are designed to teach a system of ideas to a people across generations. While documents such as official government policy statements also give voice to the situationally-unbound rhetoric of ideology, those documents are more narrow in scope. They tend to be as situational as speeches or debates. Textbooks, however, are themselves situationally-unbound and, therefore, reflective of the situationally-unbound rhetoric they carry.

#### The Importance and Timeliness of Focusing on War and Peace

Because there is such a mass of topics falling within the realm of ideological rhetoric, it is necessary to limit the study to a particular topic. The primary reason for focusing on the situationally-unbound rhetoric of ideology as it argues for and against entry into and withdrawal from war is really quite simple. America has a tradition of supporting her involvement in wars by appealing to articles

of American foreign policy, especially as it relates to America's policies toward war; Spanier documents the point.

American depreciation of power and reluctance to recognize it as a factor in human affairs makes it psychologically necessary to rationalize actions [specifically, wars] in the international arena in terms of ideological objectives and universal moral principles. American power must be "righteous" power used not for purposes of power politics and selfish national advantage but for the peace and welfare of all mankind. [One of the results of the rationalization is a] public image of the United States as a noble and unselfish crusader on behalf of moral principles.

. . .<sup>17</sup>

Thus, the United States appeals to its ideology to rationalize its involvement in wars. Part of the goal of this study is to determine whether the country also teaches those rationalizations to its children through the high school American history textbooks surveyed in this study. Such teaching would facilitate the perpetuation of the ideology.

In addition to this clear appeal to the ideology when rationalizing wars, it is also clear that there are other reasons for focusing on wars in this study of ideological rhetoric. War is a particularly timely topic right now, and focusing on wars will facilitate studying the symbolic movement of arguments about those wars. The following sections develop these last two points.

### The Topic Is Timely

War is a particularly appropriate topic of study right now because of its timeliness. The United States has just

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<sup>17</sup> John W. Spanier, American Foreign Policy Since World War II (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1960), pp. 85-63.

concluded the longest war in her near two-hundred-year-old history. Even as thinking is adjusted to the conclusion of the war, there remains confusion about what caused and justified United States involvement in that war. It may be--in fact, probably is--too early to examine the arguments for war and peace which have surrounded the war in Vietnam, but a study of traditional arguments for and against war in our society may provide an understanding which will be useful later, when the arguments for and against war in Vietnam begin to filter down into high school American history textbooks.

The current confusion is not likely to subside soon. May indicates that in all likelihood "history teachers in the 1990's may find this [war] no easier to explain than we find it today."<sup>18</sup> Perhaps studies of the type here being undertaken will help those teachers and their students understand and deal with the ideological interpretations which will inevitably filter into the books from which they teach and learn. Not only has the war in Vietnam been a long one, but it also has been a bitterly debated one which imposed conditions of war with which even the mighty military machine of the United States was unable to cope. The confusion caused by this particular war needs to be cleared up. Perhaps this illumination can be accomplished by recognizing the fact that the body of arguments about war in general is

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<sup>18</sup> Ernest R. May, "What Will Teachers Say About the Vietnam War?" The Gainesville Sun, February 11, 1973, p. 11A.

specific enough to isolate and study within the morass of topics available for and subject to investigation.

It also seems to make sense to study the arguments for and against war for purely pragmatic reasons. Primary among these is the fact that the United States has been involved in several major wars during her relatively short existence, and those wars have been conveniently spaced at somewhat regular intervals. Thus, there is a considerable amount of material about war and peace which can be studied. Bonner indicates just how many wars the United States has been involved in:

Despite her long isolation from the affairs of Europe, the historical record of the United States has not been a strikingly pacific one. Since declaring her independence from Great Britain in 1776, the United States has been engaged in seven major wars and such lesser conflicts as Indian wars, an undeclared war with France in 1798, and the recent "police action" in Korea.<sup>19</sup>

Although Bonner's statement needs updating to include the just concluded war in Vietnam, the point to be made here is that wars are a highly practical focus of study.

#### The Topic Is Appropriate to the Proposed Scholarly Investigation

In addition to the timeliness and practicality of the topic, it should also be noted that the topic of war provides an ideal test for a subthesis of the study mentioned

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<sup>19</sup>Thomas N. Bonner, "America's Wars and Their Causes: As Seen Through the Eyes of Historians," The Social Sciences, XLVII (January, 1956), 22.

earlier, i.e., that the situationally-unbound rhetoric of an ideology may well take the form of a symbolic movement.

"Since the needs of the class change quite radically," according to Drucker, "it will have to change its theory too."<sup>20</sup> As a result of the fact that wars occur at fairly regular intervals in the history of the United States, focusing on war as a topic should provide a workable way to test the movement thesis that the changing theory of an ideology can be detected and traced through studying the situationally-unbound rhetoric of that ideology.

Thus, the original decision to focus on war because of society's use of ideology to rationalize involvement in wars is supported by several other reasons. The timeliness of the subject, the practicality of the subject, and the ability of the topic to contribute to scholarly investigation of symbolic movement all add to the value of this choice of emphasis. As textbooks can serve well as the vehicle through which the situationally-unbound rhetoric of ideology is transmitted, so can war serve as the topic of the rhetoric which is so transmitted.

### The Methodological Approach of the Study

The first three sections of this chapter have concerned themselves with justifying this dissertation as a legitimate concern for rhetorical scholarship. In designing the study,

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<sup>20</sup>Drucker, p. 154.



it was necessary to recognize the validity of Duhamel's observation that "rhetoric occupies a peculiar position among the arts and that it cannot be adequately interpreted apart from the ideological context in which it appears."<sup>21</sup> In fact, this study goes beyond that recognition and is designed as a study which will investigate the rhetoric of the ideology itself.

### Defining and Explaining the Function of Ideology

An underlying assumption of this study is that not only is rhetoric grounded in its ideology, but also that it plays a role in the attempt to perpetuate that ideology. The overall purpose for this study may be summarized as (1) an attempt to develop a theoretical conceptualization about the way ideology is perpetuated through the use of systemic arguments, (2) an analysis of high school American history textbooks to determine how widespread the use of systemic arguments is in those textbooks; and (3) an attempt to determine whether the systemic arguments on war and peace reflect a symbolic movement which can be analyzed from a perspective of situationally-unbound rhetoric.

Since an understanding of the concept of ideology is central to the theoretical foundation of this entire study, Chapter Two will be devoted to a discussion of this concept from

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<sup>21</sup>P. Albert Duhamel, "The Function of Rhetoric as Effective Expression," in The Province of Rhetoric, ed. by Joseph Schwartz and John A. Rycenga (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1965), p. 36.

the standpoints of its (1) definition and (2) function--including a definition of systemic argument, which is a tool through which ideologies function rhetorically. Political theorists will provide the bulk of the material about ideology. H. M. Drucker, Karl Mannheim, Miladin Zivotic, and Abraham Edel are among those who will be contributing to the study and are illustrative of the theorists whose works were sought out while the author was developing the material in this area. The rhetorical function of ideology will be abstracted from the writings of political theorists like Amelie Rorty and M. Rejai and of rhetorical theorists and critics like Richard Weaver, Herbert Simons, and Michael Osborn. These short lists of names are not, of course, all-inclusive but are meant to provide an indication of the kinds of sources which will be used in this chapter.

### Explaining History's Role in Perpetuating Ideology

In Chapter Three, history's role as a storehouse and conveyor of systemic arguments on war and peace will be discussed. Here, then, will be a description of the differences in (1) what history is ideally and (2) what it is in practice. Included will be a discussion of the historian's role in the ideal and in the practical functions of history. These sections will depend for support primarily on historiographers such as David Fischer and Edward Carr. In the final section of the chapter, those problems peculiar to

history textbooks will be emphasized. The supporting material for this section will be provided by rhetorical scholars such as Robert Scott and Donald K. Smith; textbook analysts such as Ray Billington, Jack Nelson, and Gene Roberts, Jr.; and teachers of high school American history courses.

#### Identifying and Describing the Textbooks

Chapter Four will contain a description of the arguments gleaned from surveyed high school American history textbooks. The primary objective will be to describe the data which result from the textbook survey. To facilitate this description, the statements gathered from the textbooks will be grouped into systemic arguments favoring American entry into wars, arguments opposing American entry into wars, and whatever other groupings grow out of the survey. The data will be organized in such a way that they can be used easily in support of the analyses which will complete the study.

Since it is obvious that not all high school American history textbooks can be read, this study will survey only those books which have been identified by other scholars as being the most popular and, thus, the most widely read during the fifty-year period covered by this study. Because of the refusal of publishing houses to release sales figures, these scholars have had to use other methods of determining which textbooks have been the most widely used. Billington, for example, compiled his list for the early 1960's by



combining reports supplied to him by the nation's leading authorities on teaching American history in secondary education.<sup>22</sup> The list Billington developed and similar lists for other time periods have been combined to form the master list for this study. Books and doctoral dissertations in textbook analysis have been the primary sources for building this list. Lists were found which identify the most widely used textbooks as far back as the 1920's, thus enabling the study to include an analysis of the books today's government leaders and older voters would have been exposed to while in high school.

The materials to be gathered from the books.--Once gaining access to these books which will be used as the rhetorical documents of the study, the author will read the discussions in those books of major wars to identify the following: (1) all reasons listed by each text for American entry into each war; (2) all reasons cited by each text for withdrawing from each war; and (3) all cited dissenting arguments against entry into or withdrawal from each war. These statements will be examined to determine how to group them and how to describe those groupings.

Identifying and describing arguments.--Once the arguments have been identified, their distribution across wars and across time will be described. The concepts of helical and rectilinear movement will be useful in describing the

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<sup>22</sup>Ray Allen Billington, The Historian's Contribution to Anglo-American Misunderstanding (New York: Hobbs, Dorman & Company, Inc.), 1966.

data. Rectilinear movement may be noted in answers provided by the data to these questions: (1) What changes take place in the reasons for different wars? (2) What differences may be found in textbooks with significant time periods separating their publication dates? (3) What differences can be noted in the use of systemic arguments in books published during war periods when compared with those published during peace time? Do those published during wars tend to be more nationalistic?

Second, the concept of helical movement will be helpful in describing the answers to these questions: (1) To what extent do reasons recur across periods of time separating wars? (2) To what extent do arguments recur across periods of time separating publication of textbooks? (3) Are any arguments used to explain entry into all wars?

### Analysis and Evaluation of Systemic Arguments

Chapter Five will provide an analysis and evaluation of the arguments for and against American entry into wars. This chapter will utilize data from the surveyed high school American history textbooks and from the definitive works on each war to answer such questions as (1) To what extent is the ideology a false reflection of reality? and (2) To what extent do Presidential war messages serve as sources of systemic arguments?

Serving as a basis for analysis and evaluation will be answers provided by the textbook survey to these questions:

(1) To what extent are systemic arguments explained or supported? (2) Do the patterns of movement detected in the arguments provide sufficient data to describe the symbolic movement of ideology? (3) What is the role of systemic arguments in simplifying the reasons cited by definitive war histories for entry into the wars? (4) How widespread is the use of systemic arguments in the rhetorical discourse of the textbooks surveyed? (5) What generalizations can be drawn concerning the correlation between a war's generating controversy and its being explained in terms of systemic arguments? (6) What is the tone of the arguments set forth by the textbook authors?

The final section of Chapter Five will discuss the conclusions and implications of the study. It will make some general projections about how the results of this study might be used in future research studies and how the results might be used by and useful to the various contributing academic fields.

#### The Contribution of this Study

Each dissertation is expected to make an original contribution to learning. Most contributions in rhetoric and public address tend to be very specific because of the focus on situationally-bound rhetoric. Focusing, as it does, on situationally-unbound rhetoric, however, this study proposes to make a different kind of contribution. The study will

draw from different, yet overlapping, fields of learning. The political theorists from philosophy, political science, and political sociology will contribute an understanding of the meaning and function of ideology. Historians will provide the definitions and descriptions of history and of historians and will indicate what their roles in society are. Textbook analysts will provide lists of the books to be surveyed and will provide suggestions which will help identify ideology's role in those textbooks. Rhetorical theorists and critics will provide the concepts necessary to describe and evaluate the rhetorical aspects of materials studied.

Since the contribution will grow out of the integration of these diverse fields, this study will be interdisciplinary in nature. Each of the fields contributing to the study will also receive insights into itself gained from overlapping with other areas. Thus, the ultimate contribution of this study will be in the areas of broadening the scope of rhetorical studies and of encouraging further interdisciplinary studies of rhetoric.

## CHAPTER TWO

### IDEOLOGY

- I. Some Problems of Studying Ideology
- II. Defining Ideology
  - A. It Has Its Origins in Class Theory
  - B. Ideology Is Pervasive
  - C. Ideology Is an "Official" Political Dictum
  - D. Ideology Is Generic
- III. Ideology's Function
  - A. Ideology Reflects Society's Self-Image
  - B. Ideology Moves Society Rhetorically by Means of Systemic Arguments
  - C. Ideology Encourages Belief in Itself
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## CHAPTER TWO

### IDEOLOGY

#### Some Problems of Studying Ideology

Essential to a study of ideological rhetoric is an understanding of the concept of ideology. There are a number of areas of learning one might turn to for such understanding, for the concept is treated by scholars in many different fields. For the purposes of a rhetorical study, however, one is forced to turn one's attention outward, since the persuasion theorists tend not to deal with the concept of ideology. Emphasis is perhaps best placed on political theorists from sociology and philosophy.

Political theorists in sociology are concerned with the way men are moved by each other and by society as a whole within the context of a social structure such as the focus of this study, the United States. Political theorists in philosophy tend to be more generic in their concerns, although they, too, tend to focus on particular societies. Those who are concerned with political and social philosophy tend to have much the same focus as political sociologists and, thus, supplement understanding of the concept of ideology gleaned from that area. It should be noted that



specific writers such as Edelman, Heberle, and Leff really do not "belong" to any one discipline of academe but tend, instead, to be claimed or utilized by all disciplines interested in a broad theoretical understanding of concepts, such as ideology, which play a significant role in explaining man in society.

A specific problem encountered in dealing with ideology is an inability to recognize that everyone in society is ruled by and depends on ideology. Laymen seem to be unable or unwilling to acknowledge their own dependence on ideology to govern their lives. The tendency is to believe one's own approach to life is the "right" approach, while those in opposition to this approach are being ruled by an ideological view of the world. Perhaps the only way to deal with an ideology is to step back for a while and, as Mannheim suggests, "look at it 'from without.'"<sup>1</sup> Since an ideology is so much of the way one sees the world, however, to accomplish this task of viewing ideology from without one must engage in what Mannheim described as "suspending, for a time, the whole complex of its assumptions, thus doing something other than what is prescribed in it at first glance."<sup>2</sup>

Adding to the difficulty of dealing with ideology as a concept is the fact that the word itself has highly

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<sup>1</sup>Karl Mannheim, From Karl Mannheim, ed. by Kurt H. Wolff (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 119.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

negative connotations in this society. One tends to believe governmental spokesmen when they tell him that what he believes is true and factual, while what his enemies say is mere ideological nonsense. Thus, one problem of this study is to recognize the validity of Heberle's statement that "in popular language, the term ideology is often used in a derogatory sense, as if the political opponents were intentionally dishonest in their proclamations of purposes, creeds, and beliefs."<sup>3</sup> Part of the task of escaping this pejorative sense is to realize that "ideology has no such derogatory connotation," again using Heberle's phraseology, and to unload the term by providing it with a neutral definition.<sup>4</sup> Drucker's statement is true that "until very recently 'ideology' was almost always used pejoratively. It was, as the philosophers used to put it, a 'boo-word'. This is to say that describing something as 'ideological' was a way of condemning it."<sup>5</sup>

The truth of Drucker's statement should serve as additional incentive to define the term, as is the primary function of this chapter. Once that task is accomplished, the remainder of the chapter will be spent describing and

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<sup>3</sup>Rudolph Heberle, Social Movements: An Introduction to Political Sociology (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1951), p. 28.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>H. N. Drucker, "Marx's Concept of Ideology," Philosophy, XLIII (April, 1972), 157.



explaining the scope and function of the concept of ideology since those characteristics also will be important to this study as a whole.

### Defining Ideology

Edel appears to be correct in claiming that "objective truth in social theory is unattainable."<sup>6</sup> Perhaps a truth is near at hand, however, when it becomes clear that most theorists about ideology, whether their approaches are specific or general, tend to have compatible definitions--all of them reflecting a concern with ideas, beliefs, and values which guide society.

For purposes of this study, ideology may be defined as a system of beliefs, ideas, and/or value judgments which function to justify the operations of a social structure--including its actions taken and positions held--and to codify the popular political mythology of that society. It has its origins in class theory. It is pervasive. It is an "official" political dictum. It is generic.

### It Has Its Origins in Class Theory

While it has been easy to keep in mind Drucker's statement that "the concept of ideology as we now use it . . . stem[s] from Karl Marx," it is also easy to lose sight of

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<sup>6</sup>Edel, "Reflections on Ideology," Praxis (1967), p. 567. Edel's full assertion is that "ideologies are thus fundamentally incomparable, objective truth in social theory is unattainable, perhaps even altogether meaningless."

the fact that Marx, as the concept's originator, developed the concept of ideology in conjunction with his developing theories about the way classes interact and deal with each other in the struggles which mark unstable social situations.<sup>7</sup> Drucker calls attention to the fact that each class must have its guiding principles.

One of the needs of every class is a theory which will orient it to its world and prescribe its future tasks. Since the needs of the class change radically it will have to change its theory too. Throughout its life the theorists of the class will search assiduously for whatever factual or scientific basis for their preconceptions they can find. When no such basis can honestly be found, something which looks like one will be patched up and put forward. Honest or not, a class will exalt as "true" that theory which seems to provide good reason for actions it wants to take in any case.<sup>8</sup>

It takes little imagination to realize that class can be broadened to indicate a whole, basically homogeneous, society, but the fact remains that understanding of the concept of ideology grew out of a concern with classes. A brief focus on classes at this point will help indicate the extent to which ideology permeates a society.

Classes and other subgroups are microcosms of the larger society and they exist in all societies. Entering the debate about whether or not the United States is a classless society would be beyond the scope of this study and is irrelevant for its purposes. But it is clear that

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<sup>7</sup>Drucker, p. 152.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 154.

viewing classes as groups within a larger society will assist in determining the pervasiveness of ideology within society. By examining the fact that subideologies exist throughout a society, it will be easier to understand the notion that an overall ideology permeates the society as a whole. Furthermore, by acknowledging the degree of allegiance each group has to its own subideological underpinnings, it will be easier to understand and appreciate the potential for an entire society to be dominated and moved by its ideology.

### Ideology Is Pervasive

To begin, then, it should be acknowledged that whether one terms them classes or they even meet the technical definitional requirements of classes, there are many distinct groups in the country which can be identified. Religious groups, ethnic groups, geographic groups, social groups, etc., all exist in the country, and each has its own subideology. Each of these groups, in other words, has a system of thought which governs the behavior of its members when they are in contact with each other. There are at least two supporting arguments for this line of analysis.

First, it should be noted that subideologies are in essence part of the larger ideology and draw their substance from the parent ideology. Lane, for example, indicates that ideologies of groups "are [inevitably] torn from their

context in a broader belief system, and share the structural and stylistic properties of that system."<sup>9</sup>

Second, it is clear that groups have allegiance to the parent ideology. Obviously, subideologies overlap and, at times, conflict. When they conflict, the prevailing ideology tends to be that of the parent group. In most situations, for example, if there were to be a conflict between "the American Way" and the ideological stance of one of the smaller groups, the overriding American ideology would be the prevailing factor in making a decision. Allegiance would follow the same pattern as formation of the ideologies. That is, since subideologies grow out of a broader ideology, the primary allegiance would be first to the parent ideology and second, to the subideology. Garstin indicates that allegiance to an ideology is strong primarily because, no matter how much change takes place within an ideology, "there always remains a hard core of beliefs which is constant and unchanging."<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, according to Garstin, the ideology itself forbids deviation of belief. Here again, then, the ranking order of the ideologies would determine the depth of commitment to each. Garstin explains that ideologies are

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<sup>9</sup>Robert E. Lane, Political Ideology (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), p. 15.

<sup>10</sup>L. H. Garstin, Each Age Is a Dream (New York: Bouregy & Curl, Inc., 1954), p. 79.

marked by an "intolerance [which] is usually revealed in a narrowness of doctrine which forbids deviation from the 'party line;' from the accepted principles and propositions which constitute the ideologies, and in a fanatical belief in their absolute rightness."<sup>11</sup> Thus, even if a subideology decided to oppose the parent ideology on a particular issue--an unlikely situation--it would be exposed to harsh, unrelenting pressure to "get back in line."

#### Ideology Is an "Official" Political Dictum

Ideology tends to be an "official" political dictum. Even when it is not actually an official government pronouncement, it has about it an official appearance. It evokes political mythology to help maintain its power; it evokes various propagandistic symbols to help in its expansion efforts; and, tying all these matters together is the fact that ideology tends to be stated. The starting point, however, is that ideology is seen as being official.<sup>12</sup> Adorno indicates that ideology is "a highly developed system

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>12</sup>It should be acknowledged that political theorists from Plato to Hobbes have argued that governmental leaders have the right and responsibility to deceive the people of the state when those leaders deem that such deception would be in the best interests of the state. It is not a purpose of this study to argue the efficacy of such deception. Rather, this study simply acknowledges the existence of such deception of ideology and sets out to examine and develop some theoretical concepts which may be useful in examining the rhetoric of ideology which is used to deceive the populace of a state.



of official beliefs."<sup>13</sup> Further, according to Simons, any conflicts which occur within society "must necessarily be controlled in the larger system's interests."<sup>14</sup> Since control is being expressed, then, ideology always appears to be official.

At this point, a difference between ideology and attitude should be indicated for the benefit of those who might consider attitude to be very similar to ideology. Attitudes are not "official," but are personal. According to Ostrom, an attitude "exists in a personal and situational context."<sup>15</sup> Ideology, of course, appears to be official and tends to transcend situational limitations. Further, a group of people may share an attitude, but they are rarely expected to do so as is the case with an ideology. All people within a society are expected to learn and accept the ideology.

Ideologies evoke political myths in part because myths tend to reinforce beliefs which the people may have and in part because myths help simplify the rather complex issues with which ideologies deal. Theorists who discuss the role

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<sup>13</sup>Theodor W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, David J. Levinson, and R. Nevitt Sanford, The Authoritarian Personality (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), p. 162.

<sup>14</sup>Herbert W. Simons, "Persuasion in Social Conflict: A Critique of Prevailing Conceptions and a Framework for Future Research," Speech Monographs, XXXIX (November, 1972), 228.

<sup>15</sup>Thomas M. Ostrom, "The Emergence of Attitude Theory: 1901-1950," in Psychological Foundations of Attitudes, ed. by Anthony G. Greenwald, Timothy C. Brock, and Thomas M. Ostrom (New York: Academic Press, 1968), p. 12.



of myth within ideology seem to agree with Sorel that "a myth cannot be refuted, since it is, at bottom, identical with the convictions of a group."<sup>16</sup> Horowitz, for example, when discussing Sorel's theory, adds that "the myth is stronger than a fact; it is a belief."<sup>17</sup>

There seems to be no doubt among these theorists that political myth is closely aligned with ideology. Lasswell and Kaplan, for example, assert quite simply that ideology "is the political myth functioning to preserve the social structure,"<sup>18</sup> and that the political myth "consists of the symbols evoked not only to explain but also to justify specific power practices."<sup>19</sup> Rejai goes further by indicating that ideology must simplify its primary messages if such messages are to be communicated successfully: "The myth in ideology is socially and historically conditioned. It communicates a fairly complex message in simplified form, which is indeed a hallmark of all ideology. Successful communication of ideology and its myth(s) will not take place except

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<sup>16</sup> Georges Sorel, Reflections on Violence, trans. by T. E. Hulme (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1915), p. 33.

<sup>17</sup> Irving Louis Horowitz, Radicalism and the Revolt Against Reason (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1961), p. 135.

<sup>18</sup> Harold D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan, Power and Society: A Framework for Political Inquiry (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950).

through simplification."<sup>20</sup> Such simplification will be seen to take place primarily through the use of systemic arguments.

Part of the long-range purpose of any ideology is to expand its influence and power. Such expansion is encouraged and reinforced by evoking symbols around which large numbers of people can rally. The evoking of symbols, according to Garstin, is primarily a propagandistic operation: "Symbols, slogans, songs, parades, rallies, study groups and socials are all made use of in diffusing ideologies, as are such techniques as name-calling, mud-slinging, and glittering generalities, to name a few other devices."<sup>21</sup>

Finally, it should be noted that ideology is not simply some vague collection of meaning which never is made public. Quite the contrary, ideology does indeed tend to be stated, frequently and publicly. Heberle documents the point. "One rarely finds a well-organized, systematic presentation. Ideologies are usually formulated in proclamations, resolutions, speeches, programs, platforms, pamphlets, essays, and newspaper articles."<sup>22</sup>

Attitudes, on the other hand, are not openly expressed. In fact, one can know an attitude only by inferring it from

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<sup>20</sup>M. Rejai, Decline of Ideology? (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1971), p. 6.

<sup>21</sup>Garstin, p. 5.

<sup>22</sup>Rudolf Heberle, Social Movements: An Introduction to Political Sociology (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1951), p. 25.

stated opinions or from overt behavior. Cronkhite indicates that "we have no measure of 'attitudes' except 'overt behavior.'"<sup>23</sup> Overt behavior, then, indicates attitudes, and attitudes may be given voice through stated opinions, but attitudes themselves generally are not stated. Bettinghaus concludes the point by indicating that "it seems useful to retain the notion of attitude as a conceptual bridge between an individual's psychological states and his overt behavior. The collection and evaluation of opinion statements provide the best estimate of attitude."<sup>24</sup>

### Ideology Is Generic

The further one pursues an investigation of ideology, the clearer it becomes that ideology is a very general concept which provides the ultimate justification for a society's operations. In essence, ideology is the generic justification for all the specific actions or stances a society may wish to take. Aiken elaborates on the point by stressing the generic nature of ideology.

Now political ideology is nothing but political discourse (as distinct from political science) on its most general formative level. It is, that is to say, political discourse insofar as the latter addresses itself, not just to specific, piecemeal reforms, but to the guiding principles, practices, and aspirations

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<sup>23</sup>Gary Cronkhite, Persuasion: Speech and Behavioral Change (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc. 1969), p. 9.

<sup>24</sup>Erwin P. Bettinghaus, Persuasive Communication (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1968), p. 22.

by which politically organized societies absolutely, or else in certain typical situations, ought to be governed. This being so, political ideologies inevitably include, among their leading articles, statements of general principle or method and expressions of basic attitude, orientation, and concern which, as they stand, are so highly abstract as to appear to many minds preoccupied with day-to-day problems of "practical politics" virtually meaningless. Such statements are of course habitually formulated in terms like "general welfare," "common good," "justice," "equality," "democracy," "security," and the rest.<sup>25</sup>

As Aiken indicates, the generic nature of ideology makes it difficult for many to deal with, but it is generic precisely because it is the ultimate authority to which any societal appeal is carried. It must be general and abstract enough to handle any specific situation which may arise in the day-to-day functions of explaining and justifying actions taken or stances held on the part of the society as a whole.

An attitude, unlike an ideology, is grounded in the psychological states of individuals. As such it is much narrower than ideology. It applies to the situations encountered by individuals, and does not transcend situations for whole nations. As was indicated earlier, attitudes may be shared by large numbers of people but, while ideologies are tied to societies, attitudes are primarily related to individuals. As Bettinghaus indicates, "an attitude . . . is an individual's structure or organization of psychological processes."<sup>26</sup> Thus, ideologies are generic, attitudes specific.

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<sup>25</sup>Henry David Aiken, "The Revolt Against Ideology," in The End of Ideology Debate, ed., by Chaim I. Waxman (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968), pp. 251-252.

<sup>26</sup>Bettinghaus, p. 21.

### Ideology's Function

Although ideology is a highly intangible concept, it does have certain identifiable functions within a society. To the extent that it fulfills those functions, it manifests itself in ways that can be dealt with in a study such as this one. An ideology serves at least three functions within a society. First, it tends to reflect the wishes and/or theoretical underpinnings of a societal structure at large. In this sense, it matters not whether the reflection is realistic or accurate because, if men in society believe in the ideology, they will accept it and act in accordance with it. Rejai indicates that "beliefs, in short, say nothing about the truthfulness or falsity of a notion or an attitude; they imply only a psychological state of acceptance."<sup>27</sup> The ideology provides a codification for those beliefs.

Second, ideology tends to help move society to new positions or to reinforce already held positions. This second function tends to be performed through the use of systemic arguments, a rhetorical tool which will be defined when both functions are examined in this section. Third, ideology encourages the belief among members of society that its articles are true.

### Ideology Reflects Society's Self-Image

The reflecting function of ideology is inherently

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<sup>27</sup> Rejai, p. 3.



inaccurate. Since virtually all societies have a set of beliefs by which they support their own "right" approach to existence, they must all be considered "ill" in the sense that no system of beliefs can reflect reality with a high degree of accuracy, especially during times when the reality may be injurious to the well-being of that society, or to its sense of well-being. The overall reflective function of an ideology, then, is to maintain an image which reflects the wishes of the society at large, whether or not that reflection is accurate beyond the confines of the society.

Since an ideology is seen primarily as a set of ideas, beliefs, and values which are accepted and acted upon by society, it functions in part to reflect the way a society sees itself. But it should be pointed out that this reflection is not necessarily accurate. After all, the society has an image of itself that may or may not be in keeping with the reality of any given situation. An ideology will tend to reinforce those things which are believed and acted upon and ignore those things which are contrary to the beliefs of the society. An ideology, in short, will not contradict itself, but will generally reflect conditions not perhaps as they are, but as custodians of the ideology wish them to be seen.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Custodians of ideology is not a pejorative label, as may be implied by some. Garstin defines the phrase as referring to "a leadership who act as their [ideologies'] official philosophers. Their philosophers provide the official statements concerning ideological policy and these



It is, after all, the custodians who, according to Garstin, see to it that "ideologies are protected from assaults [in part] by the use of . . . abstract statements [which], if skillfully worded, are not only difficult to analyze but are also subject to a multitude of interpretations."<sup>29</sup> These abstract statements may be one reason why ideologies tend to be viewed pejoratively, as was explained earlier. Abstract statements which seem to obscure reality may be seen by those holding an opposite view as referring to what Edel described as "views that were somehow bent out of shape, distorted to seem brighter than the reality they expressed."<sup>30</sup>

If the way a society sees itself through an ideology is that society's self-image, then virtually all societies are reflected by ideologies which distort reality. In fact, no society can stand off and view itself directly. Thus, no society can have an accurate self-image. A true picture might perhaps be conceivable, but only in a society either so unstructured as to be without ideology or in the midst of such great social change or turmoil that it would be impossible for the society to delude itself into ignoring the harsh reality of the situation. Such conditions,

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statements are to be accepted by the supporters of the ideologies without question" (p. 4). Operationally, the term refers to the official spokesmen for a society, be they government leaders, party officers, or political theorists who formulate the ideological positions.

<sup>29</sup>Garstin, p. 4.

<sup>30</sup>Edel, p. 565.

obviously, are very rare. Thus, virtually all societies "will reflect reality in a distorted way."

### Ideology Moves Society Rhetorically by Means of Systemic Arguments

Systemic argument needs to be defined. Despite frequent negative reaction to the concept of ideology, that reaction should be expected because, in part, of the rhetorical and argumentative function of ideology. It has already been shown that the use of abstraction leads to misunderstanding. But it should also be noted that the very act of espousing an ideology is inherently rhetorical. Part of the concern at this point is to define the type of rhetoric being used by ideology, so that the process of perpetuating ideology can be better understood.

The rhetorical function of ideology is described best in terms of systemic argument. Perhaps a definition of systemic argument should be prefaced with Weaver's admonition "that the language of definition is inevitably the language of generality, because only the generalizeable is definable. Singulars and individuals can be described but not defined."<sup>31</sup> Thus, until data have been gleaned from the textbooks which will provide such details, it will not be possible to describe the specifics of systemic arguments. But, an overview definition of systemic argument can be

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<sup>31</sup>Richard Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953), p. 190.

defined in the process of using that definition to describe a subdivision of ideology.

Each time an ideological system engages in explanation of its actions or its policies to its subjects or those outside its own societal jurisdiction, it is in a kind of symbolic conflict with those people, because it is directing arguments toward them. Since the situationally-unbound rhetoric of ideology tends to be argumentative in nature, it can best be defined as systemic argument: an assertion of putative fact which functions as a justification for action(s) taken or positions held on the part of the social structure. Such an argument is addressed to the public at large and is intended to instruct the populace as to what action and/or attitude in the situation being considered is most in keeping with the articles of ideology.

Within the framework of ideology, a systemic argument is a specific philosophical justification for an action taken or a conclusion drawn. Thus, ideology attempts to fulfill its rhetorical function of justifying action to the people by use of systemic arguments. It assumes the people are generally in agreement and support actions being taken and that, primarily, it needs to explain the action by relating that action rhetorically to those ideological articles people hold to be true. The channel to use in the explanation should be readily available if Simons is correct in stating that other ideological statements have long been

passed on by educators. "The dissemination of culturally approved values as 'fact' has been a historic function of educators, a means by which social order is legitimated and preserved."<sup>32</sup>

Quite often, the social order needs this legitimation, because the action being taken is of such a nature that it must be related clearly to ideological beliefs if it is to be assured of solid support on the part of the people. Such would obviously be the case when such action is highly controversial and has engendered debate among various factions of the populace. Even when debate or social dissent is not likely, however, the action should always be related to generally accepted ideological values to assure popular support of these actions. Rorty indicates that the reference to ideology is essential.

If it is the very criteria for interest and good that are at issue, the argument must still proceed by reference to some further conception of a human value. This ideological point goes hand in hand with a semantic one: no argument for change will be comprehensive unless it is phrased in terms that can be understood as appealing to accepted canons of value."<sup>33</sup>

As part of understanding what a systemic argument is, it is necessary to know something about its source or origin. The systemic argument may originate in a variety of ways. A systemic argument may be a part of any written document which

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<sup>32</sup>Simons, p. 241.

<sup>33</sup>Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, "Naturalism, Paradigms, and Ideology," The Review of Metaphysics, XXIV (June, 1971), 652.

forms part of a cornerstone for the ideological system. In that case, the argument will very probably have originated in the writings of one or more of the philosophers or political theorists whose thoughts formed the argumentative/philosophical support for the type of society set forth by custodians of ideology.

On the other hand, a systemic argument may develop out of a particular, narrow debate on a specific issue. Some "ideal" combination of words may be invented in the heat of debate which supports the ideological position so well that it is quoted extensively by others, with the likely result that soon the originator is lost sight of and only his words remain. When encountering this type of instance, it is easy to react in much the same way Griffin did when he discovered the role played by unknown speakers in historical movements: "We may come to a more acute appreciation of the significance of the historically insignificant speaker, the minor orator who, we may find, is often the true fountainhead of the moving flood of ideas and words."<sup>34</sup> Some of the most prevalent systemic arguments may have been originated by very minor spokesmen for the ideology.

Thus, a systemic argument may become a commonplace as its use increases. But the commonplace nature of systemic arguments adds to their effectiveness, because they are not

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<sup>34</sup>Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (April, 1952), 133.



generally perceived as blatant propaganda devices. The persuasive impact also may be strong because of the argumentative appeal made to the authority of the ideology as a whole. And then, of course, the great power of presumption rests with the status quo.

The tie-in ideology has with rhetoric is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that when used by ideology, rhetoric maintains the essentially pragmatic function which was described by Morris as being one which deals with the "relation of signs to their interpreters."<sup>35</sup> Systemic arguments, in a sense, are the rhetorical middle men which serve to relate the overriding ideology to the people in society.<sup>36</sup> Systemic arguments, of course, are used by the ideology custodians to help in establishing and perpetuating the inherently inaccurate picture of reality sought and reflected by ideology.

In this sense, the collective purpose of systemic arguments is similar to that ascribed by Simons to other system-orientations: "however reasonable they may appear in

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<sup>35</sup>Charles W. Morris, "Foundations of Theory of Signs," International Encyclopedia of Unified Science, I (July, 1938), 30.

<sup>36</sup>In this sense, systemic arguments perform the same basic function attributed by Bitzer to rhetoric as a whole. He said that rhetoric "comes into existence for the sake of something beyond itself; it functions ultimately to produce action or change in the world; it performs some task. In short, rhetoric is a mode of altering reality" (Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric, I [Winter, 1968], 3). Of course, Bitzer is at this point also altering the meaning of rhetoric somewhat. There are times when rhetoric reflects reality quite accurately. Systemic arguments, on the other hand, always alter reality since such alteration is an inherent part of the ideologies they support.



principle, in practice they have constituted indiscriminate rationales for the preservation of the existing systems and for those privileged persons who would wield power within them."<sup>37</sup> Systemic arguments are no different. They, too, are used by the ideology custodians to help preserve the system. The custodians seek to convince the populace, or reinforce their already held belief, that the ideological interpretation of reality is in fact the reflection of reality they should accept as accurate.

This rhetorical function of ideology should dispel the more idealistic view of rhetoric's function given voice by Bryant: "Rhetoric recognizes the strength of the fictions men live by, as well as those they live under; and it aims to fortify the one and explode the other."<sup>38</sup> He seems to be correct in saying that rhetoric "is concerned with values,"<sup>39</sup> but he fails to acknowledge the validity of the charge made by Frye that "rhetorical value-judgments are closely related to social values and are usually cleared through a customhouse of moral metaphors: sincerity, subtlety, simplicity, and the like."<sup>40</sup> While Frye's own

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<sup>37</sup>Simons, p. 229.

<sup>38</sup>Donald C. Bryant, "Rhetoric: Its Function and Scope," in The Province of Rhetoric, ed. by Joseph Schwartz and John A. Rycenga (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1965), p. 22. This article originally appeared in the Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXIX (December, 1953), 401-424.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 21.

metaphor may be lacking, his point that rhetoric goes hand in hand with generic social values is well taken.

In fact, far from helping men in society to explode the myths of their ideology, the rhetorical function of ideology is designed to help perpetuate those myths and reinforce belief in them on the part of the populace. Systemic arguments are argumentative because the societal system is involved in a struggle with the consciousness of its members and must use whatever devices are most effective to persuasive advantage in convincing its members to maintain the inherently distorted picture of reality reflected by ideology. Because the ideology custodians see their role as an argumentative one, they tend to use systemic arguments in much the same way Simons says coercive persuasion is used by government systems.

Coercive persuasion applies to any situation in which at least one party sees himself in genuine conflict with another, has some coercive power over the other, and finds it expedient to establish, persuasively, any or all of the following: (1) his relative capacity to use coercive force, (2) his relative willingness to use coercive force, (3) the relative legitimacy of his coercive force, (4) the relative desirability of his objectives.<sup>41</sup>

It is primarily the last two of these persuasive objectives which are the aims of an ideology when it employs systemic arguments. The custodians of ideology feel that the public should be willing to allow society to convince them that official actions are correct and desirable.

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<sup>41</sup>Simons, p. 232.

Further, the custodians feel, it must continually be the government's power and right to inform the populace of this desirability, or the incomplete picture painted by the ideology may begin to clash with reality as a result of open debate. Thus, not all information is released so that the public can scrutinize the conditions of reality. Only systemic arguments about the nature of reality and the legitimacy of the actions taken by the powers to reflect that reality are allowed to be debated. That information which tends to reflect a reality opposed to the ideological picture of reality is withheld from the general public by the custodians of ideology.<sup>42</sup>

### Ideology Encourages Belief in Itself

In order to understand the power ideologies have over men in all societies, it should be recognized that men tend to act according to their beliefs. If something is believed to be true for a man, then for that man it is true--and, what is more important, he will act as though it is true. Thus, when one realizes that someone is defending as true a position known to be indefensible, it is easy to rationalize the conflict by recognizing that the other person

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<sup>42</sup>One of the lessons currently being learned from the so-called Pentagon Papers case is that government withholds information from the public not only when revelation of such information might endanger national security--in which case it should be withheld--but also when revelation of such information might paint a picture of reality quite different from the description being presented by the custodians of the ideology.

is merely a victim of his ideology--or perhaps the person who knows the position is indefensible is merely a victim of his own ideology in refusing to recognize the validity of the other position. Speaking pejoratively about this kind of relativism as an approach to history, Ortega summarized the position by noting that "the truth, then, does not exist: there are only truths 'relative' to the frame of mind of the person considering the matter."<sup>43</sup> Such explanation applies to those who accept, without question, the articles of an ideology as "true."

It is convenient to paraphrase Ortega by noting that the ideas, beliefs, and values which make up an ideology can be seen as a collection of "truths" reflective of the frame of mind of the entire society or subgroup. The important thing to realize, as Garstin indicated, is that for the people within that group, no matter its size, the ideology is true and will not generally be disputed.<sup>44</sup> Each person within such a structure may well be under the influence of competing ideologies, as was illustrated in the section on the pervasiveness of ideology, but within a functioning framework these competing ideologies will be ranked in a priority alignment such that "ideological jurisdictions" are clearly understood by members of the society. Thus, for an American, the American Ideals form the foundation of his

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<sup>43</sup> José Ortega y Gasset, The Modern Theme, trans. by James Cleugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), p. 29.

<sup>44</sup> Garstin, pp. 3, 4, 48, 79.

guiding principles in life.<sup>45</sup> Further, it is safe to assert that virtually all Americans are trained to believe in the American Ideals as part of their growing and educational process, so that virtually everyone is aware at some level of consciousness of the ideological jurisdictions which overlap throughout the society.

The effectiveness of the ideology is protected against the charge of inconsistency by the fact that the ideology is reflected in a rhetorical movement of a symbolic nature. This movement can be identified and understood more clearly after examining the systemic arguments which are used to perpetuate the ideology. At this point, however, it seems logical to recognize the validity of Garstin's observation that "ideological content is not static once it is formulated."<sup>46</sup> Further, such recognition indicates that, while the changes in ideology might be perceived by some members of society, those members would accept the changes unquestioningly because of their very strong belief that the ideology continues to grow as it discovers more facts about the conditions of reality in the world.

Not only do men expect their ideology to change and look forward to it, but they also would have difficulty

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<sup>45</sup> Throughout this study, American will (1) refer to a resident of the United States who, though not necessarily a citizen, has been a resident of the country for a long enough period of time to acquire as his the parent ideology that of the United States and (2) be used as the adjectival form of the United States. America, likewise, will refer throughout only to the United States.

<sup>46</sup> Garstin, p. 79.



challenging the validity of the changes that do take place in ideology precisely because of their belief in that ideology. Rejai specifies the point when he says that "ideology should be viewed as consisting primarily of beliefs and only secondarily of ideas. The basic distinction is that ideas are subject to scientific operation (such as testing and verification), whereas beliefs are not."<sup>47</sup>

### Summary

The primary function of this chapter was to define the concept of ideology for purposes of this study. In order to accomplish that task, however, it was necessary also to discuss the various problems involved in the study of ideology, differentiate between ideology and attitude, and describe the function of ideological rhetoric. Since systemic argument is such a vital part of the function of ideology, it was necessary to define systemic argument as part of the description of the function of ideology. Now that these various tasks have been accomplished and ideology has been adequately defined, it is possible to move on to the role of history as it applies to this study.

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<sup>47</sup>Rejai, p. 3.



## CHAPTER THREE

### HISTORY: ITS IDEAL AND PRAGMATIC ROLES

#### I. Ideally, What Is History?

A. Answers About the Past

B. Fair Representation of the Past?

#### II. Practically, What Is History?

A. Imperfections in Historical Stances

B. History Helps to Perpetuate Ideology

#### III. Particular Severe Limitations on History Textbooks

A. Unwary Ignorance on the Part of Authors

B. Inertia Caused by Over-Reliance on  
Secondary Sources

C. The Impact of Pressure Groups on Textbook  
Writing and Selection

#### IV. Summary

### CHAPTER THREE

#### HISTORY: ITS IDEAL AND PRAGMATIC ROLES

In Chapter One, it was indicated that the rhetorical documents for this study would be high school American history textbooks. While the use of such documents was justified, no attempt has yet been made to indicate just what relationship exists between history and ideology.

For purposes of this study, clarification of that relationship requires at least three steps. First, history's ideal fulfillment of its own goals should be described so that an understanding can be attained of the kinds of goals historians traditionally set for themselves. Second, it should be acknowledged that history, like most other human endeavors, rarely achieves its ideal goals. Thus, an examination should be made of what happens to history when it falls short of its goals. Third, since history textbooks specifically will be the rhetorical documents utilized in this study, an examination should be made of the very special problems inherent in writing history textbooks. It is in examining the textbooks that a full understanding of the role played by those books in the perpetuation of ideology will be gained.

### Ideally, What Is History?

Rarely does one stop to ask himself the question, "what is history?" Yet, he goes about talking about what history tells him or what he can learn from history as though he knew exactly the answer to his own unasked question. He seems to feel history is simply what took place in the past. Usually, he fails to realize that history is not what took place in the past, but a record of those events. Without the record, the events themselves would have no way of being known or understood by men living in contemporary society. Of course, the record does not compile itself. It is put together as a result of scholarly research carried out by a person interested in finding out what happened in the past and in determining the relevance of those events to contemporary society. The scholar and his methods determine what kind of a record will be produced.

### Answers About the Past

A historian asks questions and seeks answers about the past. He is a scholar who has been trained to delve into events of the past, to learn all that he can about those events, and to put that knowledge in some order which will make the past meaningful as a foundation for the present and the future. Fischer describes this investigative function quite simply when he defines a historian as "someone (anyone) who asks an open-ended question about past events and

answers it with selected facts which are arranged in the form of an explanatory paradigm."<sup>1</sup> The basic tool used by all historians, it would seem, is the process of questioning.

Of course, these questions cannot be asked in a vacuum. They must have some structure, some organizing framework, if they are to be able to fulfill their function adequately. Answers will be meaningless if there is no organizing framework out of which the questions are asked. Again, Fischer supplies the explanation which puts the matter of questions in perspective.

A moment's reflection should suffice to establish the simple proposition that every historian, willy-nilly, must begin his research with a question. Questions are the engines of intellect, the cerebral machines which convert energy to motion and curiosity to controlled inquiry. There can be no thinking without questioning--no purposeful study of the past, nor any serious planning for the future. Moreover, there can be no questioning in a sophisticated sense without hypothesizing, and no systematic testing of hypotheses without the construction of hypothetical models which can be put to the test.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the apparent validity of Fischer's statement, however, it should be noted that ideally the historian should never impose his own structure on the answers to his questions. Ideally, the hypotheses he uses to frame his questions will themselves grow out of other questions, so that he will never be guilty of imposing his point of view

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<sup>1</sup>David Hackett Fischer, Historians' Fallacies (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. ix.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

on the past.<sup>3</sup> Carr seems to agree with this statement when he indicates that there are "questions which the historian is bound by his vocation incessantly to ask," but he also warns that "the historian who accepts answers in advance to these questions goes to work with his eyes blindfolded, and renounces his vocation."<sup>4</sup> While there must be structure, there must also be a limit on the degree of control the historian himself may exercise over that structure.

#### Fair Representation of the Past?

Answers to historians' questions will inevitably provide a wealth of historical facts so vast as to demand that the historian select from among them. And beyond these facts, there must always be a myriad others of which the historian is not even aware. The problem is compounded when one realizes that those facts of which he does have knowledge range from empirically verifiable phenomena to subjective value judgments. The historian must decide which facts to select from within this spectrum. Carr acknowledges the acrobatic function the historian must perform: "Somewhere between these two poles--the north pole of valueless facts

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<sup>3</sup>It must, of course, be acknowledged that no such ideally written history exists; nor will it ever exist. Man cannot look back into the past without the inherent necessity of imposing himself on the past. Thus, whenever one looks at the past, he will, of necessity, look at the past through his own weak, biased eyes. An inherent part of being human is the inability to escape oneself.

<sup>4</sup>Edward Hallett Carr, What Is History? (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 108.

and the south pole of value judgments still struggling to transform themselves into facts--lies the realm of historical truth. The historian . . . is balanced between fact and interpretation, between fact and value. He cannot separate them."<sup>5</sup>

He cannot separate them, but to make any sense out of the facts available to him the historian must be highly selective. He must glean the material relevant to his purpose of understanding the past from all of the data available. And he must discard the rest as superfluous.

In the ideal fulfillment of his function, the historian must be accurate as well as selective. He must adopt a kind of detached selection attitude if he is going to be fair to history. Again, Carr provides the support by noting that "the serious historian is the one who recognizes the historically conditioned character of all values, not the one who claims for his own values an objectivity beyond history."<sup>6</sup> Only by letting history impose order can the historian be honest in fulfilling his function.

The kind of accuracy demanded of a historian might be praised in many scholarly pursuits, but it is merely expected of the historian. It is a part of his function. In thinking of this requirement, Carr commented: "I am reminded of Housman's remark that 'accuracy is a duty, not a virtue.' To praise a historian for his accuracy is like

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 175-176.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 108-109.



praising an architect for using well-seasoned timber or properly mixed concrete in his building. It is a necessary condition of his work, but not his essential function."<sup>7</sup>

### Practically, What Is History?

It is one thing to acknowledge the ideal fulfillment of the historian's function, but it is another matter entirely to find that ideal function applied in the works of historians. Just as questions the historian asks are not asked in a vacuum, neither is the historian himself functioning in a vacuum. He is caught in a framework himself which may be more binding on him than is the framework of the hypotheses he uses as a guide to asking his questions. History, then, in its practical application, is the result of the efforts of a human being who may consciously or unconsciously impose his own beliefs or ideology on the past in order to impose an interpretation on the past which may not be accurate.

### Imperfections in Historical Stances

It should be acknowledged that a historian is both more and less than a scholar who asks questions. He is, above all, a human being who is subject to the same pressures, values, and beliefs that any other human being is influenced by. He approaches history out of a particular societal background and framework which influence his work. Simply stated, the historian cannot escape being what he is. No matter how

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

hard he tries to be objective, he, too, is influenced by societal values of which he may not even be aware. Carr simplifies the point by noting that the historian is himself part of history.

The historian, then, is an individual human being. Like other individuals, he is also a social phenomenon, both the product and the conscious or unconscious spokesman of the society to which he belongs; it is [in] this capacity that he approaches the facts of the historical past . . . The historian is part of history. The point in the procession at which he finds himself determines his angle of vision over the past.<sup>8</sup>

It would seem, then, that even scholarly historians are strongly influenced by their surroundings.

As human beings existing in a societal environment, historians can no more escape being influenced by that environment than can any other human being. It is inevitable that the social environment will reflect itself in the historian's work.

It is, then, both natural and totally understandable that the historians should be "guilty" of falling victim to and reflecting their own biases. Carr stated that it is obvious "that you cannot fully understand or appreciate the work of the historian unless you have first grasped the standpoint from which he himself approached it; second, that that standpoint is itself rooted in a social and historical background."<sup>9</sup> When reading history, it should be remembered that the historian was operating out of a particular

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 42-43.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

ideology. He, like the reader, was also once a beginning student of ideology, but he has gone beyond that beginning by spending most of his career studying many of the ideology's intricacies, learning how they fit together to weave a pattern that deserves to be shown to other students who follow after him.

Even recognizing his own susceptibility to his environment may not keep the historian from falling victim to it. Dance stressed the difficulty by emphasizing how hard it may be for himself and other historians "to think ourselves out of the milieu in which we have been reared, to force ourselves into points of view which are strange to ourselves."<sup>10</sup> Dance goes on to indicate that historians become "hidebound by the cultural traditions which we inherit, and by the traditions of learning which we acquire in our educational environment."<sup>11</sup>

Part of the result of historians' reflecting their biases is that whatever they label as facts which they have selected for transmission through their work may not be, strictly speaking, factual at all. The reason for this apparent contradiction lies in the multiple uses of the word fact. Explanation is due. While discussing ideology in Chapter Two, the way men act according to their beliefs was

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<sup>10</sup> Edward Herbert Dance, History the Betrayer (London: Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 1960), p. 45.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

described. It was indicated that if a man believes something to be true, he will act as if it is true. Thus, that piece of data will become for him a "fact," whether it is in reality true or not, and whether it can be empirically verified or not. As a parallel to this notion, it might be pointed out that ideologies depend for perpetuation on entire systems of such "facts." All systemic arguments are facts of this type, and systemic arguments make up a large part of the content of history. These facts have meaning primarily in relation to each other and to the system of thought which gives them birth. Since historians' biases are beliefs, it is easy for them to label as facts things which they believe to be true.

#### History Helps Perpetuate Ideology

Part of the practical role of history, especially as it manifests itself in history textbooks, is to assist in perpetuating the ideology of the society. Part of this role entails an attempt to help people in society accept and act on their beliefs as facts. If the individual believes in the system, then he is very closely related to these facts and will act as though they are true. One function of history is to assist the parent ideology in turning systemic arguments into the kinds of beliefs by which men run their lives and to which men appeal when they need help in making a decision. If the effort succeeds, history will be perceived as being

true by its readers and will have succeeded in fulfilling its ideological role.

It should be noted that it is not necessarily the intention of historians or of writers of history textbooks that their works be used for perpetuating ideology. Rather, that is seen as one of the justifications, explicit or implicit, for studying history. Billington, for example, points out that "both educators in the United States and a majority of the people view instruction in the nation's history as a practical pragmatic means of protecting and preserving the American way of life."<sup>12</sup> He reinforces his assertion by noting that "today, as in the 1830's, the purpose of American education is to instill loyalty to country into the nation's youth and to educate future citizens into the wise use of the franchise."<sup>13</sup> While Billington's comments apply to education as a whole, Draves speaks directly to the reason for studying history: "One of the justifications for the study of history is that it transmits from generation to generation the culture of a given society."<sup>14</sup>

This approach has a greater impact than simply turning loose so-called opinion leaders to work on the people in

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<sup>12</sup>Ray Allen Billington, The Historians' Contribution to Anglo-American Misunderstanding (New York: Hobbs, Dorman & Company, Inc., 1966), p. 27.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>14</sup>David D. Draves, "What's Wrong With the Teaching of History in the High School?" The Social Studies, LVI (March, 1965), 105.

society in a massive persuasion campaign. This way, educators act for the custodians of ideology by teaching the ideology to young people so that they will grow up believing the myth to be true, thus being more likely to support it and to assist in the perpetuation effort which will be directed toward their children. There would seem to be no more efficient or better way to perpetuate a myth than to teach it as truth to the students required to learn the story of their country and its system of government.

#### Particular Severe Limitations on History Textbooks

Ideally, high school history should serve, in Lauwerys' words, to "give all pupils sufficient knowledge of the past to enable them to understand the present."<sup>15</sup> The knowledge of the past attained in high school history classes, however, is not always geared to provide the students with an accurate picture of the past. In part, this fact is due to the nature of the history textbooks, which are the main source of learning history.

High school students are not as fortunate as scholars who utilize definitive histories and have access to the finest historical scholarship available. The history which is taught to high school students is not written by highly scholarly writers, by-and-large, nor is it taught by the best of historical scholars. Thus, the ability to maintain

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<sup>15</sup> J. A. Lauwerys, History Textbooks and International Understanding (Paris: UNESCO, 1958), p. 71.



the same high degree of excellence demanded by history scholars inevitably begins to slip.

### Unvary Ignorance on the Part of Authors

Not surprisingly, one reason for the "ignorance" attributed to textbook writers is actually a function of the medium with which they deal. Their works are not lengthy, scholarly, definitive documents about particular aspects of history. On the contrary, a textbook for American history covers the entire span of the nation's history. This breadth of coverage necessitates a more rigorous selection process than would be necessary in a treatment of a part of the nation's history. The extreme selectivity necessarily imposes a certain lack of coverage or competence on the textbook. Relating the problem of selection to the treatment of specific groups within a society, Dance says that "history textbooks are necessarily short, and the shorter they are, the more they restrict the scope of the enquiry. Selection has to be made quite ruthlessly, and this inevitably entails inadequacy in the treatment of many human groups."<sup>16</sup>

Of course, the main reason for the textbook writer's unconscious bias is the very humanity which he and all historians share, as discussed in the section on the practical definition of history. To be human is to have biases of

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<sup>16</sup>Dance, History Without Bias? (London: The Council of Christians and Jews, 1954), p. 49.

which one is not aware. If that human being happens to write textbooks, then his biases will inevitably find their way into the textbook. It is not really the fault of the writer, nor is it an "error" which he can correct, unless his biases are pointed out to him by a critic who has his ear. Billington points out that, in spite of attempts which have been under way for some time to eliminate bias in textbooks, "nationalistic bias is as persistent in today's schoolbooks as in those used a generation ago. More important, this bias is potentially more dangerous, because it is less easy to detect. Usually it appears to stem not from any deliberate or conscious prejudice on the part of the author, but from the unconscious self."<sup>17</sup>

Even though the biased statements present in textbooks are there without the conscious knowledge of the textbook authors, their impact is felt nonetheless by students learning their nation's story from such textbooks. Lauwerys assumes that all authors engaged in writing textbooks would eliminate all biased statements from their textbooks if they could. In spite of this possibly naïve preface, however, he has to admit that all authors are biased.

All authors hold opinions they are not aware of holding, and all, or nearly all, are biased and prejudiced without knowing it. This has effects on the textbooks they write and, consequently on the opinions and attitudes of the children who use them. The result is that those textbooks serve ends which their authors would repudiate and deplore.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Billington, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup>Lauwerys, p. 31.

These biases, of course, include the ideological orientation which the authors have absorbed and come to believe along with other people in the society. Thus, in spite of the fact that some would readily believe that history textbooks are totally objective, the truth of the matter is that these texts are riddled with bias emanating, in part, from the unwary ignorance on the part of the authors.

#### Inertia Caused by Over-Reliance on Secondary Sources

While an author's own unwary ignorance may cause serious problems regarding the filtering of biases into the classroom, there are also some methodological problems which add to the limitations of history textbooks. Basically, these methodological problems take two forms.

Although some well-known history scholars write textbooks, for the most part a writer of history textbooks is primarily that and not a history scholar in his own right. Therefore, he depends for much of his material on history scholars and other textbook writers, thereby utilizing secondary sources rather than primary sources as the foundation of his work. Lauwerys indicates that "far too often, this compilation is the result chiefly of consultation of other textbooks. Thus, ancient errors are handed on, and contact with first-hand up-to-date research grows ever more tenuous."<sup>19</sup> Lauwerys also expresses agreement with the fact

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

that although the textbook writer "may be a scholar as well . . . he is not functioning primarily as such when he writes" a textbook.<sup>20</sup>

Primarily because textbook writers are not their own scholars, it is possible for new research findings to take quite a long time to filter down to the levels from which textbook writers do their job of compiling. Thus, even if the textbook author has in mind to present a fair and complete picture of his country's history, he is limited by the quality of the scholarship in secondary sources which he uses as his research materials. Billington indicates that the "latest scholarly findings have to filter down to the textbook level slowly, usually appearing first in general monographs, then in the larger histories, and finally in textbooks. This process requires years so that texts are sometimes a generation behind in reflecting current historical views."<sup>21</sup>

It can, of course, be argued that the blame for the time-lag should not be laid at the feet of the textbook author. Dance occupies this position when he indicates that the textbook author may not be entirely to blame for the time-lag.

It may take anything from years to generations for the discoveries of research to percolate into the schoolbooks. And for this the textbook writers are not to blame. Articles on research are legion; they

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>21</sup>Billington, p. 5.

deal with all history from before Adam till after Hitler, and no textbook writer can keep pace with a hundredth of them. For another thing, most specialist research is published in journals which few textbook writers can be expected to see--and in any case, many a new piece of research is followed by another, contradictory piece of research in some equally inaccessible publication.<sup>22</sup>

Dance's point is well taken, but it seems to miss the mark entirely. If the writer of textbooks were genuinely interested in filling his work with respectable scholarly findings, he could utilize journals more in researching his book. It would be more difficult for him to compile his material out of journals, but it would result in much better history than is the case with using other textbooks and history books as the main sources of information. Billington seems far nearer an accurate depiction of the situation when he labels such lax scholarship on the part of textbook authors as "bias by inertia" and says that the term "means the failure of textbook writers to keep abreast of current historical scholarship, and their consequent readiness to perpetuate on their pages outworn legends that usually exhibit nationalistic bias."<sup>23</sup>

The fact that historians and history textbook authors are human and subject to all the flaws of human character has been mentioned several times. It should not come as a surprise, then, to discover that being part of a human

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<sup>22</sup>Dance, History the Betrayer, p. 28.

<sup>23</sup>Billington, p. 5.



community has something to do with the poor scholarship which contributes to the perpetuation of ideology in the rhetorical discourse of high school American history textbooks. The writer of textbooks is hampered not only by his own scholarly limitations, but also by the inertia of the very society he is attempting to teach. Since he is himself a part of that human society and is likely to be unable to write from a totally unbiased position, it might be easily understood that he lets himself get trapped by his own inertia and that of the society he writes about. It is so understandable, in fact, that Dance again offers an excuse for the authors' laxity by taking the attitude that that is simply the way things are.

We are so accustomed to thinking along well-worn lines that we rarely make the intellectual effort needed to strike out along lines of our own. Generations of teachers teach what they learned when they were young; generations of scholars learn what they will teach to others; and therefore the history taught in schools and universities lags far behind the new world for which it is supposed to prepare its citizens.<sup>24</sup>

In spite of the understandable nature of the situation, however, the blame should be borne by the authors. It is gratifying, then, to note that Billington's language indicates that his assessment of the situation places a bit more blame on the authors than did Dance. Billington says that "compounding this crime [of allowing a time-lag] is the tendency of all humans to think along well-worn lines rather

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<sup>24</sup>Dance, History the Betrayer, p. 47.



than endure the intellectual torment needed to grasp new ideas. Historical distortions are passed on from generation to generation, from teacher to pupil, from textbook author to textbook author at all educational levels."<sup>25</sup>

#### The Impact of Pressure Groups on Textbook Writing and Selection

Whether history textbook authors want to write biased accounts of history or take any action to prevent that bias is not really at issue here. More important, perhaps, is the fact that there are groups which exercise inordinate influence on the markets for which these authors write. Furthermore, these pressure groups seem to want the kind of bias which shows up in our textbooks. Many of these groups would echo Westwood's statement that "the primary aim of a course in American history in secondary school should be the teaching of the freedoms which, in sum, distinguish America: teaching what they are, whence they came, how they evolved, how they have been attacked, defended, and qualified, and, finally, something of how they may be challenged in the future."<sup>26</sup>

One would hope, implicitly, that this statement reflects the views of only a small reactionary minority of Americans, so that it could be discounted as the work of extremists. Such hope, however, is little more than a pipe dream. In

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<sup>25</sup>Billington, pp. 5-6.

<sup>26</sup>Howard C. Westwood, "A Layman's View of High School American History," The Social Studies, XLVI (January, 1955), 3.

fact, Billington has already been quoted as indicating that "a majority of the people view instruction in the nation's history as a practical, pragmatic means of protecting and preserving the American way of life."<sup>27</sup> Thus, the opinion persists throughout the country that the primary purpose of teaching history is to pass on the ideology to the young generation. That opinion tends to manifest itself in the form of pressure brought to bear by national pressure groups on the writing, publication, and selection of textbooks.

Whatever else may be said of groups which attempt textbook censorship, it may be said that they represent a vivid manifestation of the function of ideology discussed in Chapter Two. It was explained at that time that ideology reflects the wishes of a society, whether or not those wishes picture reality as it actually is. Ideology reflects reality as the custodians of the ideology think it should be, not necessarily as it actually is. The same basic observation can be made about those groups which attempt censorship of textbooks. On the whole, these groups believe themselves to be defenders of the ideology and feel it is their responsibility to force their views on a society which they believe has gone lax and is no longer concerned about protecting and perpetuating the American Ideals.

Always, according to Nelson and Roberts, pressure groups strike without warning and force the particular object of

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<sup>27</sup>Billington, p. 27.

their attack to respond as quickly as possible.<sup>28</sup> On a national scale, of course, this fact results in forcing society as a whole to make a decision about the direction it wants textbooks to take. Nelson and Roberts elaborate on this point.

Whatever the differences in dress or the nature of their worries, would-be textbook censors share the same convictions: that their views are the correct ones, that the child will be subverted if he hears the opposing philosophy. Always, the censors ignore the fact that no textbook can ever be perfect, and that textbooks will always reflect the changing knowledge and the changing interpretations of successive generations. Society, as a result, must decide whether it wants its textbooks to be shaped by pressure groups or by scholars seeking to supply the most accurate information available. Too often, society has yielded to the pressure groups.<sup>29</sup>

As has already been stated in the preceding section, all pressure groups think their way is the only way which is right for the country.<sup>30</sup> This fact implies, obviously, that such groups tend to be of the type generally referred to as right wing or super patriotic groups. By and large, this generalization is accurate. For example, groups actively taking part in censorship activities include the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Sons of the American Revolution, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars,

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<sup>28</sup> Jack Nelson and Gene Roberts, Jr., The Censors and the Schools (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1963), p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>30</sup> Documentation of the specific censorship activities of groups labeled in this section as pressure groups is available in Nelson and Roberts.

the various White Citizens Councils, and such extremist groups as America's Future, Inc., and the John Birch Society.

On the other hand, however, from time to time groups which are highly stable in most situations and which tend to be only moderately conservative get involved because they feel that they are themselves being threatened or cheated by something they find in the textbooks. For example, the Florida State Chamber of Commerce once forced a published geography textbook to be changed by the publishers because it contained more pictures of California than of Florida. Bad for the tourist business, they felt. Nelson and Roberts provide another interesting example: "FTC [Federal Trade Commission] investigators learned that the National Electric Light Association, the American Gas Association, the American Railway Association and many of their member corporations had attempted--and often succeeded--in placing the utilities' own interpretation of history before the nation's children."<sup>31</sup>

Among the primary targets of pressure groups engaged in censorship activities at both local and state levels are the selection agencies whose responsibilities include choosing textbooks for all the schools in their jurisdiction. Generally, attacks on selection agencies demand one of two things: a change in the make-up of the agency itself or a

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<sup>31</sup>Nelson and Roberts, p. 31.

change in a textbook selection. In the first instance the demand usually takes the form of groups' demanding that selection agencies admit lay people to their membership. The assumption being made by the pressure groups in this instance is that sufficient pressure can be brought to bear on the appointing officer(s) to force into membership lay people who will support positions of the group. Baxter indicates that "recently, textbook critics have demanded more participation by lay people in the selection of textbooks. It is not clear whether the demands are based on the assumption that laymen are better qualified than educators to select textbooks, or on the assumption that adoption agencies have not been diligent in their duties."<sup>32</sup>

The second instance is just as common as the first. The intent, in this case, is usually to get a book changed, done away with, or selected, depending on the desires of the pressure group. Pressure groups have been so successful in rallying support that their campaigns to get books abolished, changed, or selected keep selection agencies quite worried. Nelson and Roberts cite a not unusual result of this kind of pressure: "In a candid moment in 1960, a deputy superintendent of the school system in the District of Columbia revealed his formula for avoiding controversy

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<sup>32</sup>James Edward Baxter, Selection and Censorship of Public School Textbooks (A Descriptive Study), Ph.D. dissertation (University of Southern Mississippi, 1964), p. 37.



over textbooks. The plan was simplicity itself. 'We try to make sure that the books we select are not objectionable to anyone.'"<sup>33</sup> Billington acknowledges the validity of this statement and points out that "local pressure groups, often more nationalistic than the authors or users of textbooks, are in a position to bring pressure on school boards and adopting commissions to select texts mirroring their own point of view."<sup>34</sup>

These examples seem to reflect a natural condition of this society: that the more powerful individuals and groups become, the more they reflect and emphasize the rectitude of ideology. It is but a short step beyond that stance to insist that all people in the society should be taught the ideology the way the powerful groups or individuals think it should be taught.

Textbook publishers come in for a great deal of pressure directly from pressure groups. Sometimes, demands made are for changes in a particular book to make it conform to a particular set of criteria. Other times, demands are for suspending publication of a book the pressure group finds particularly offensive. This kind of pressure is nothing new for publishing houses. The first concentrated pressure they experienced came after the Civil War, when the North and the South each demanded textbooks specifically designed

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<sup>33</sup>Nelson and Roberts, p. 178.

<sup>34</sup>Billington, p. 28.



to present a one-sided view of the Civil War and its surrounding issues. Nelson and Roberts indicate that publishers "began publishing regional textbooks, one version for the South and another for the North, and, as a result, fogged the minds of students for more than two generations."<sup>35</sup>

After so many years of dealing with, and giving in to, pressures, publishers seem to have become comfortable in the role they play in furnishing textbooks. They remain cautious and do not produce any highly controversial books because, as Nelson and Roberts point out, they are "well aware that an onslaught of criticism against a text by a rightwing or minority group can touch off a chain reaction among textbook selection committees and cause sales to drop off in many areas."<sup>36</sup> Publishers' concern has become so pointed that, according to Nelson and Roberts, the American Textbook Publishers Institute [now the Association of American Publishers] issued a policy directive urging that "publishers 'must try to avoid statements that might prove offensive to economic, religious, racial or social groups or any civic, fraternal, patriotic or philanthropic societies in the whole United States.'"<sup>37</sup> Obviously, the publishers have their hands full trying to avoid offending any of that multiplicity of groups.

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<sup>35</sup>Nelson and Roberts, p. 26.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 181.

Although attacks on publishers and selection committees do a great deal of damage and cause textbooks to be lost or turned into bland, mildly stimulating treatments of their subject matter, pressure groups' impacts can be seen most clearly when they take on an individual author. When such attacks take place, according to Nelson and Roberts, they tend to be directed against the "philosophy of the authors."<sup>38</sup> The most striking example Nelson and Roberts provide of such attacks concerns the pre-World War II campaign against "a mild-mannered Columbia University . . . education professor, Dr. Harold Rugg."<sup>39</sup> Dr. Rugg had borrowed money to finance his dream of a series of social science textbooks to be used in elementary and high schools and had worked on the series for over a decade before having his first volume published. His works "won immediate acclaim from educators, and schools throughout the nation began adopting them."<sup>40</sup>

At the height of his success, Rugg's books were being used by almost half of the school systems in the country and were topping 289,000 volumes per year in sales. Then the bottom fell out, because pressure groups decided that Dr. Rugg was a bit too "pink" to allow him to have any influence on the children of this country. In less than six years, Rugg's sales fell more than 90 percent.

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

The attacks on individuals emphasize, perhaps better than any other example, the commitment of pressure groups to ideology. These groups are willing to go to any lengths necessary to prevent a book's being used which the groups decide is not in keeping with the ideology of this society, at least, not in keeping with their interpretation of that ideology.

### Summary

Although this has been a rather detailed chapter, its purpose has been quite simple. The chapter has explained the ideal and the practical manifestations of history as an intellectual discipline. The chapter has noted that in the ideal state of history, historians answer questions about the past by selecting facts which present as accurate a picture of the past as possible. In discussing more practical aspects of history, it was noted that historians are themselves human beings who reflect their own biases and their own positions in history. It was noted that, in this very practical state, history helps in the perpetuation of ideology, especially as it is written in history textbooks for use in high school American history courses.

Having drawn a distinction between the ideal and practical functions of historians, several severe limitations of history textbooks were discussed. It was indicated that authors of textbooks operate out of an unwary ignorance, which is imposed on them in part by the medium in which

they write and in part by their own unconscious biases. In addition, it was indicated that the practice of relying too much on secondary sources results in slowing the process of getting the latest scholarship into the minds of school children. Finally, the impact of pressure groups was discussed, with emphasis on the fact that pressure is aimed not only at textbook authors, but also at selection committees in the various states and at textbook publishers. With this background in mind, the survey of the high school American history textbooks, as rhetorical discourse, can begin.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### A DESCRIPTION OF SYSTEMIC ARGUMENTS IN SURVEYED AMERICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

- I. Identifying the Most Widely Used Textbooks, 1920-1969
- II. Wars Used in the Study
- III. Describing the Data
  - A. Arguments
  - B. Illustrating the Distribution of Arguments
  - C. Categories
  - D. Movement in the Arguments

## CHAPTER FOUR

### A DESCRIPTION OF SYSTEMIC ARGUMENTS IN SURVEYED AMERICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

#### Identifying the Most Widely Used Textbooks, 1920-1969

Various sources were used to gather information needed to identify the most widely used high school American history textbooks for the period 1920-1969. Throughout the history of American education, studies of textbooks have been carried out for many different purposes. Some of these studies have been authorized by committees of organization interested in some aspect of education, while others have been written by individual scholars interested in specific textbook content as it relates to educational problems. All of the studies have at least two things in common: (1) their authors have a strong desire to be able to generalize from the results of the studies and have, therefore, tended to use the most widely used textbooks for their analyses; and (2) all the studies have tended to be limited in the range of time covered due, in large part, it seems, to the great difficulty of obtaining information regarding the extent of use of textbooks prior to the time contemporary with the studies' being written.



Because this study was designed to cover a specific time period of fifty years, it became necessary to utilize a great many studies limited to shorter spans of time to build a list of high school American history textbooks which were the most widely used between the years 1920 and 1969. The use of these other studies for that purpose was dictated by the adamant unwillingness on the part of the publishers or the industry-wide publishing association to divulge information which would help in building the list needed.<sup>1</sup>

A total of seventeen studies of high school textbooks was used to build the list of most widely used textbooks to

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<sup>1</sup>One of the most disappointing encounters was with a high-ranking official of the Association of American Publishers. This organization is the industry-wide association which keeps track of the growth of the industry, provides publishing houses with a variety of information requested by them, and provides whatever other services that may be requested from within the industry. According to the particular individual contacted, the Association has on hand, or can obtain, any circulation information one might need for scholarly purposes. The Association will not release the information, however, because it is "classified" by industry officials.

Since such information could be released to scholars without revealing specific sales figures, some pressure should be brought to bear on the industry to bring about release of this information. There are many legitimate textbook studies which need to be carried out, but which cannot even be attempted without an inordinate amount of unnecessary, non-academic "busy work" on the part of the scholar. The publishing industry is, perhaps, understandably protective about specific sales figures. But, the industry has taken an extreme and petty defensive stance on these matters. It would be a relatively simple and non-threatening matter to prepare and release generalized lists of the "most widely used" books in various fields and for different time periods. Hopefully others will join in an effort to make such lists available.

be used as rhetorical documents in this study.<sup>2</sup> Of the seventeen studies used, twelve were doctoral dissertations dealing with various aspects of the content or organization of high school American history textbooks. The remaining

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<sup>2</sup>Specifically, the following seventeen sources were used to build the list of textbooks to be used as rhetorical documents in this study: James Edward Baxter, Selection and Censorship of Public School Textbooks (A Descriptive Study) Ph.D. dissertation (University of Southern Mississippi, 1964); Ray Allen Billington, The Historians' Contribution to Anglo-American Misunderstanding (New York: Hobbs, Dorman & Company, Inc., 1966); The Canada-United States Committee on Education, A Study of National History Textbooks Used in the Schools of Canada and the United States (Canada: The American Council on Education, 1947); Marie Elizabeth Carpenter, The Treatment of the Negro in American History School Textbooks (Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Publishing Company, 1941); June Roediger Chapin, Differentiation of Content in United States History Textbooks, Ed.D. dissertation (Stanford University, 1963); John Wagner Hanson, An Inquiry into the Role of History Textbooks in Improving Understanding of Human Actions, Ph.D. dissertation (University of Illinois, 1953); Leon Hellerman, An Analysis of President Polk's Mexican Policy in Selected American History Textbooks for Secondary School, Ed.D. dissertation (New York University, 1972); Robert Addison Meredith, The Treatment of United States-Mexican Relations in Secondary United States History Textbooks Published Since 1956, Ed.D. dissertation (New York University, 1968); Helen N. Merritt, Certain Social Movements as Reflected in United States History Textbooks, Ph.D. dissertation (New York University, 1952); Andrew Peiser, An Analysis of the Treatment Given to Selected Aspects of Populism and the Populist Party in American History High School Textbooks, Ed.D. dissertation (New York University, 1971); Bessie Louise Pierce, Civic Attitudes in American School Textbooks (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1930); Pierce, Public Opinion and the Teaching of History in the United States (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926); Robert H. Ratcliffe, A Critical Analysis of the Treatment Given Representative Social Science Ideas in Leading Eleventh Grade American History Textbooks, Ph.D. dissertation (Northwestern University, 1970); Masamitsu Tamashiro, An Analysis of Selected Aspects of United States-Japan Relations from 1905 to 1945 as Found in High School History Textbooks of Both Nations, Ed.D. dissertation (New York University, 1972); Ed.D.

five studies were books which tended to deal with somewhat broader aspects of textbooks. Although very few of the studies surveyed textbooks drawn from more than a six-year period, the studies did overlap sufficiently to provide a comprehensive list of the entire period being treated by this study.

The final list gathered in this manner contained a total of one hundred eighteen books spread over the five decades being focused on in this study. In order to provide equal representation to each of the five decades, a decision was made to decrease the total number of books to fifty and to distribute that number equally among the five decades. Then, to produce this final list, ten books were selected at random from the list of most widely used American history textbooks for each of the five decades.<sup>3</sup> The fifty books thus chosen constitute the rhetorical documents for this study and are labeled as such in the bibliography.

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Clarence Benjamin Wadleigh, Jr., Questions in American History Textbooks as Contributors to Development of Thinking Skills, Ed.D. dissertation (Stanford University, 1969); and Katrina Yielding, An Evaluation of Selected Secondary School Textbooks in the United States History, Based on an Analysis of the Treatment Given the Topic: Government Involvement in the Economy, Ed.D. dissertation (Auburn University, 1967).

<sup>3</sup>In actuality, thirteen books per decade were selected at random. The only feasible way to obtain the books was to order them through the inter-library loan system. It was feared that not all of the books could be easily located, or at all in the case of some textbooks long out of print. As protection against coming up short, therefore, thirteen books per decade were ordered, with the intention of using the first ten per decade which were obtained.

### Wars Used in the Study

In its nearly two hundred years of existence, the United States has been involved in many wars. Some of them were fought by American colonists even before they had gained their independence. Some of the wars were relatively minor affairs involving the colonists and Indian tribes, while others were global in scope. Generally, however, nine wars are considered to have been the major wars in which the United States has been involved. Listed chronologically, they are: the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the war in Vietnam.

Of the nine major wars, only seven are treated by this study. The Civil War is omitted because of its unique status of being an "in house" struggle. Although some foreign powers were involved in helping one or the other of the two sides, it was, strictly speaking, not an international struggle. Furthermore, it was felt that arguments used for and against this war would be unique to it.

The Vietnam War also was omitted from consideration in this study. That war has been completed since this study was begun, although there is still considerable trouble involving attempts to enforce the ceasefire. In addition, the war was not concluded during the five decades of the study. Thus, although the beginning of the war is mentioned in some



of the textbooks drawn from the late 1960's, the conclusion of the war is covered in none of the textbooks surveyed. Finally, it was felt that there has not been enough time since the ceasefire to permit placing the Vietnam War in its proper perspective.

### Describing the Data

#### Arguments

It was indicated in Chapter One that the textbooks would be surveyed to glean from them: (1) all reasons listed by each textbook for America's entry into each war, (2) all reasons cited by each text for withdrawing from each war, and (3) all cited dissenting arguments against entry into or withdrawal from each war. Once gathered, these arguments totaled well over two thousand individual statements. The final area projected for study--arguments against withdrawal--did not materialize in the textbooks, although there was mention of opposition to specific aspects of various treaties. Arguments for and against treaties, however, were not treated in this study.

For purposes of this study, the statements drawn from the textbooks generated twenty-one individual arguments.<sup>4</sup> Only five of those arguments were opposed to entering wars.

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<sup>4</sup>For purposes of this study, all of the individual syntheses of the statements generated by surveying the textbooks will be called arguments. It is fully recognized that these arguments are, technically speaking, categories in themselves, but the term category will be reserved for groups of arguments which are similar to each other.

Fourteen systemic arguments were identified in the area of reasons for entering war. Only two arguments for withdrawing from wars were identified, and one of them was unique to the War of 1812. There were, as has been noted, no arguments against withdrawing from wars.

Following is an illustration of the way statements from the textbooks were grouped together to form the synthesized arguments. The four statements used in the illustration were drawn at random from the many statements encompassed by the argument, "The enemy encouraged other peoples against America." The sample statements are from four different textbooks and deal with two different wars: "The British also encouraged the Indian chief Tecumseh, who welded together the Indians of the Northwest under British protection and gave signs of restlessness presaging a revolt"; "The arms the defeated tribesmen left behind obviously had been received from the British. The Americans drew the logical conclusion that the English were up to their old tricks: plotting with the Indians against the frontiersmen"; "It was announced that Germany was planning to join with Japan and Mexico in an attack upon our country, and that in the event of success Mexico, as a reward for her assistance, was to receive the states of Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas"; and "There were German spies plotting against and even destroying American industries, while other German agents schemed to involve us in a war with Mexico."



Now, these four statements, and the many others from which they were drawn, were relatively easy to deal with, for they state rather blatantly that the country with which we were soon to be at war was encouraging others against us. Having discerned the obvious similarity among these statements, it remained only to derive an argument which would accurately reflect the common denominator of the statements. "The enemy encouraged other peoples against America" seemed to fill the need. It was simple; it did not distort the meaning implicit in the individual statements which it was to represent; and it provided a general wording which could encompass all similar statements. By fulfilling these requirements, the synthesized argument accurately represents many statements in one.

The same procedure was employed in deriving all of the synthesized arguments for and against entering wars. Of course, not all of the arguments were as easy to derive as the one just cited, but nothing was forced. If a statement could not be fit into an appropriate slot, as was the case with "War was inevitable," it was left to stand alone. Thus, there are some arguments which refer only to one war, while others are used for several wars. It was assumed that the general nature of the arguments would make them applicable to several wars, but this was not always the case.

The data were divided into three areas. The first area contains fourteen systemic arguments used in the rhetorical

discourse of the textbooks to justify American entry into war. The fourteen systemic arguments favoring entry are: (1) There was widespread pressure within America to enter the war; (2) The enemy claimed sovereignty over America and her people;<sup>5</sup> (3) The enemy put her troops on American soil; (4) War was inevitable; (5) The enemy imposed unwanted taxes upon Americans; (6) America has a tradition of safeguarding the freedom of other countries; (7) America has a tradition of opposing inhumanity; (8) The enemy killed and wounded Americans; (9) The enemy violated the individual rights of Americans; (10) The enemy damaged America's trade and her right to neutrality; (11) American property was threatened, damaged, or destroyed by the enemy; (12) America desired to expand her territory; (13) The enemy encouraged other peoples against America; and (14) The enemy insulted the American flag. These fourteen systemic arguments comprise those articles of the American ideology which deal with entry into wars. Although a few other articles of the American ideology will be used to clarify some points, these fourteen are the articles specifically treated by the study.

There were only five arguments cited by the rhetorical documents as being reasons opposed to American entry into the wars. These five are: (1) There was a widespread feeling

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<sup>5</sup>In all of these arguments, enemy refers to the country(ies) against which America eventually made war. At the time of the action described by these arguments, America was not yet at war with the country(ies) so designated.

that the justification for entering the wars was unacceptable: (2) America should never be the aggressor; (3) The United States should not involve itself in other countries' wars; (4) Entering the war would damage American trade; and (5) America should not expand her territory.

Only two synthesized arguments were used by the authors of the textbooks to discuss withdrawal from wars. The first of these two--both sides grew weary of fighting--appeared only in relation to the War of 1812. It was repeated in the rhetorical discourse of the textbooks from each of the five decades. The other argument favoring withdrawal from wars was that America fulfilled her aims for the war. This argument was used to describe the reasons for withdrawing from all of the remaining six wars and was reported for those wars in each of the decades following the completion of the war. It should be clear that this second argument is a euphemism for the fact that America won the wars and could, therefore, indeed make the statement that she had fulfilled her aims for the war.

#### Illustrating the Distribution of Arguments

Table I is designed to illustrate the distribution--across time and across wars--of arguments opposing American entry into wars. Each of the columns represents one of the decades covered by this study and each of the rows represents one of the seven wars studied. By referring to the table, it can easily be ascertained which arguments against

entering a particular war appeared in the rhetorical documents from a given decade. For the sake of convenience, the arguments represented by the numbers in the body of the table are listed at the bottom of the table. The table and the information contained therein will be used if necessary in the analyses which follow in this and succeeding chapter sections.

Table I

## Distribution of Arguments Against Entering Wars

| War             | 1920's | 1930's | 1940's | 1950's | 1960's |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Amer.<br>Rev.   | 1*     | 1      | 1      | 1      | 1      |
| War of<br>1812  | 1,4,5  | 4,5    | 4,5    | 1,4    | 4,5    |
| Mex.-<br>Amer.  | 1,2,5  | 1,2,5  | 1,2,5  | 1,2,5  | 1,2,5  |
| Span.-<br>Amer. | 5      | 1,5    |        |        | 4,5    |
| World<br>War I  | 3,4    | 3      | 3      | 3      | 3      |
| World<br>War II |        |        | 3      | 3      | 3      |
| Korean          |        |        |        |        |        |

\*Numbers in the table correspond to the following list of arguments: (1) There was a widespread feeling that the justification for entering the war was unacceptable; (2) America should never be the aggressor; (3) The United States should not involve herself in other countries' wars; (4) Entering the war would damage American trade; and (5) America should not expand her territory.

Table II utilizes the same basic format as Table I to present the distribution information about the systemic arguments favoring entry into wars. Again, each column represents one of the five decades covered in the study and each of the rows represents one of the wars studied. By referring to the table, it can be ascertained readily which arguments were used in the rhetorical discourse of the textbooks to justify American entry into each war studied. To make the table easier to read, the arguments represented by numbers in the body of the table are listed at the bottom of the table. This table also will be available for use in the discussions which follow, especially in the discussion of the symbolic movement of systemic arguments across time and across wars.

Table III is designed for a purpose different from that of the first two tables. Table III is designed to illustrate the pervasiveness of use of each of the arguments for and against entry into each war. The fact that a specific systemic argument favoring entry into a particular war appears in a given decade does not give all the information needed about that argument. For purposes of analysis, it is also important to know how widespread was the use of that argument for a particular war. Table III provides that information. It specifically illustrates the percentage of books surveyed which use a given argument in the discussion of a particular war. In this table, each of the seven columns

Table II

## Distribution of Arguments for Entering Wars

| War             | 1920's                   | 1930's                   | 1940's                   | 1950's                   | 1960's                   |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Amer.<br>Rev.   | 1,2,3,5,8,9,<br>10*      | 1,2,3,4,5,8,<br>9,10,13  | 1,2,3,5,8,9,<br>10       | 1,2,3,5,8,9,<br>10       | 2,3,5,8,9,10             |
| War of<br>1812  | 1,8,9,10,11,<br>12,13,14 | 1,8,9,10,11,<br>12,13,14 | 1,8,9,10,11,<br>12,13,14 | 1,8,9,10,11,<br>12,13,14 | 1,8,9,10,11,<br>12,13,14 |
| Mex.-<br>Amer.  | 1,3,8,11,12              | 1,3,8,11,12              | 1,3,8,10,11,<br>12       | 3,8,11,12                | 1,3,8,10,11,<br>12       |
| Span.-<br>Amer. | 1,6,7,8,9,<br>10,11,14   | 1,6,7,8,10,<br>11,12     | 1,6,7,8,9,<br>10,11,12   | 1,6,7,8,10,<br>11,12     | 1,6,7,8,9,<br>10,11      |
| World<br>War I  | 1,6,7,8,10,<br>11,13     | 1,6,7,8,10,<br>11,13     | 1,6,7,8,10,<br>11,13     | 1,6,7,8,10,<br>11,13     | 1,6,7,8,10,<br>11,13     |
| World<br>War II |                          |                          | 6,7,8,10,11              | 1,6,7,8,10,<br>11,14     | 1,6,7,8,10,<br>11,14     |
| Korean<br>War   |                          |                          |                          | 6                        | 6                        |

\*Numbers in the table correspond to the following list of systemic arguments favoring American entry into wars: (1) There was widespread pressure within America to enter the war; (2) The enemy claimed sovereignty over America and her people; (3) The enemy put her troops on American soil; (4) War was inevitable; (5) The enemy imposed unwanted taxes upon Americans; (6) America has a tradition of safeguarding the freedom of other countries; (7) America has a tradition of opposing inhumanity; (8) The enemy killed and wounded Americans; (9) The enemy violated the individual rights of Americans; (10) The enemy damaged America's trade and her right to neutrality; (11) American property was threatened, damaged, or destroyed by the enemy; (12) America desired to expand her territory; (13) The enemy encouraged other peoples against America; and (14) The enemy insulted the American flag.



Table III

Percentage of Books Containing Each Argument

|    | Amer.<br>Rev. | War of<br>1812 | Mex.-<br>Amer. | Span.-<br>Amer. | World<br>War I | World<br>War II | Korean |
|----|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------|
| 1* | 10.2**        | 81.3           | 25             | 100             | 70.2           | 14.3            | 0      |
| 2  | 91.3          | 0              | 0              | 0               | 0              | 0               | 0      |
| 3  | 99.9          | 0              | 97.9           | 0               | 0              | 0               | 0      |
| 4  | 2.0           | 0              | 0              | 0               | 0              | 0               | 0      |
| 5  | 100           | 0              | 0              | 0               | 0              | 0               | 0      |
| 6  | 0             | 0              | 0              | 93.9            | 89.4           | 85.7            | 100    |
| 7  | 0             | 0              | 0              | 91.8            | 51.1           | 51.7            | 0      |
| 8  | 85.7          | 43.8           | 97.9           | 93.9            | 97.9           | 92.9            | 0      |
| 9  | 89.9          | 89.6           | 0              | 12.2            | 0              | 0               | 0      |
| 10 | 98.0          | 97.9           | 6.3            | 42.9            | 93.6           | 46.4            | 0      |
| 11 | 0             | 89.6           | 47.9           | 100             | 97.9           | 89.3            | 0      |
| 12 | 0             | 85.4           | 72.9           | 6.1             | 0              | 0               | 0      |
| 13 | 2.0           | 79.2           | 0              | 0               | 46.8           | 0               | 0      |
| 14 | 0             | 35.4           | 0              | 4.1             | 0              | 10.7            | 0      |
| 1A | 30.6          | 2.1            | 35.4           | 2.0             | 0              | 0               | 0      |
| 2A | 0             | 0              | 31.3           | 0               | 0              | 0               | 0      |
| 3A | 0             | 0              | 0              | 0               | 29.8           | 82.1            | 0      |
| 4A | 0             | 41.7           | 0              | 2.0             | 2.1            | 0               | 0      |
| 5A | 0             | 10.4           | 47.9           | 10.2            | 0              | 0               | 0      |

\*Numbers 1-14 correspond to the systemic arguments for entering wars, as listed in Table II. Numbers 1A-5A correspond to the arguments opposing entry into wars, as listed in Table I.

\*\*The figures within the table reflect the percentage of textbooks surveyed which contain each argument for the given war shown.

represents a war covered by this study and each of the nineteen rows represents one of the systemic arguments favoring American entry into wars--numbers 1-14--or one of the arguments against entering wars--numbers 1A-5A. Of course, this table will also be referred to when necessary in the analyses which follow.

### Categories

Although each of the arguments is itself a synthesis of many statements, it also seems reasonable to be able to group the systemic arguments favoring war into categories. The small number of arguments opposing American entry into wars makes it unnecessary to include them in this categorization. The reason for grouping the systemic arguments is that there appear to be "clusters" of arguments which are quite similar to each other. Furthermore, by grouping, patterns of arguments across wars and across time may be made clearer. It may be that there are no individual arguments which are used across all wars or in all decades; but, the category in which a particular argument appears may be used in every war, or in the rhetorical discourse of all books for a particular war, thus illustrating, quite clearly, helical movement of arguments across wars.

When compared, the fourteen systemic arguments favoring American entry into wars divide themselves into four categories, each consisting of at least two of the systemic arguments. Category I--There was a pro-war sympathy in the

country--includes two systemic arguments: (1) There was widespread pressure within America to enter the war; and (2) America desired to expand her territory. Both of these arguments refer not just to a reason or justification for entering wars, but also to a willingness to enter wars.

The first of the included arguments--pro-war pressure--presents no problem fitting into this category. There may be some question, however, about the placement in this category of the second of the included arguments--desire for more territory. The rationale for its inclusion is quite simple. During those times when there was expansionist sympathy in America, that sympathy lent itself readily to the support of any war which might bring additional territory in the event of an American victory. Thus, although the expansionist sentiment is not in itself purely a pro-war sentiment, it does lend itself to support of war.

Category II--The enemy made political and physical claims on America--embraces three systemic arguments:

(2) The enemy claimed sovereignty over America and her people; (3) The enemy put her troops on American soil; and (5) The enemy imposed unwanted taxes upon Americans. All three of these systemic arguments involve a claim of sovereignty over America by the enemy.

Category III--America is the protector of other peoples--also includes two systemic arguments favoring American entry into wars: (6) America has a tradition of safeguarding the

freedom of other countries; and (7) America has a tradition of opposing inhumanity. This category includes two arguments which are used in the rhetorical discourse to support the phenomenon which has come, in contemporary times, to be known as America's self-proclaimed role as policeman to the world. These two arguments are generally used in discussing America's position that she entered particular wars in part because she felt it her duty to help others.

Category IV--The enemy harmed America--is the broadest of the categories and includes six arguments supporting America's entry into wars: (8) The enemy killed and wounded Americans; (9) The enemy violated the individual rights of Americans; (10) The enemy damaged America's trade and her right to neutrality; (11) American property was threatened, damaged, or destroyed by the enemy; (13) The enemy encouraged other peoples against America; and (14) The enemy insulted the American flag. These six arguments comprise the category most widely used in the rhetorical documents' discussions of American entry into wars. Anytime another nation actually harmed, or threatened to harm, America in some way, that harm was in itself, or became a significant part of, the stated reason for America's going to war with that country.

Inclusion of the insult to the flag argument in this category may need clarification. Every time insulting the flag was mentioned in the rhetorical discourse of the textbooks it referred specifically to something which had been

done to an American ship. In the War of 1812, for example, the boarding of American ships and impressment of American sailors by the British was later referred to, in Madison's war message, as an insult to the American flag. The same argument is used by some textbook authors to label the Japanese bombing of an American gunboat on the Yangtze River prior to America's entry into World War II. Thus, the phrase, "an insult to the American flag" seems to have become a euphemism for some actual physical harm, or threat of harm, to an American ship.

In addition to the actual or threatened harm described by these systemic arguments, some of the arguments also involve the pricking of American pride. It is perceived, for example, as a slap in the face that any other country would violate the rights of American citizens, encourage other peoples against America's outreaching friendship, or insult the American flag. Thus, the pricking of American pride adds weight to the harm or threatened harm described by each of the systemic arguments included in this category.

Since the systemic arguments labeled and illustrated earlier in the chapter collapse into these categories, it should be helpful to illustrate the distribution of the categories as well as the individual arguments. Therefore, Table IV is designed to illustrate the distribution of the categories across time and across wars. Each of the five columns of the table represents one of the five decades included in

Table IV  
Distribution of Categories

| War             | 1920's     | 1930's     | 1940's     | 1950's     | 1960's     |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Amer.<br>Rev.   | I, II, IV* | I, II, IV  | I, II, IV  | I, II, IV  | II, IV     |
| War of<br>1812  | I, IV      | I, IV      | I, IV      | I, IV      | I, IV      |
| Mex.-<br>Amer.  | I, II, IV  | I, II, IV  | I, II, IV  | I, II, IV  | I, II, IV  |
| Span.-<br>Amer. | I, III, IV | I, III, IV | I, III, IV | I, III, IV | I, III, IV |
| World<br>War I  | I, III, IV | I, III, IV | I, III, IV | I, III, IV | I, III, IV |
| World<br>War II |            |            | III, IV    | I, III, IV | I, III, IV |
| Korean          |            |            |            | III        | III        |

\*The numerals in the above table correspond to the following list of categories. Category I--There was a pro-war sympathy in the country--includes systemic arguments (1) There was widespread pressure within America to enter the war; and (12) America desired to expand her territory. Category II--The enemy made political and physical claims on America--includes systemic arguments (2) The enemy claimed sovereignty over America and her people; (3) The enemy put her troops on American soil; and (5) The enemy imposed unwanted taxes upon Americans. Category III--America is the protector of other peoples--includes systemic arguments (6) America has a tradition of safeguarding the freedom of other countries; and (7) America has a tradition of opposing inhumanity. Category IV--The enemy harmed America--includes systemic arguments (8) The enemy killed and wounded Americans; (9) The enemy violated the individual rights of Americans; (10) The enemy damaged America's trade and her right to neutrality; (11) American property was threatened, damaged, or destroyed by the enemy; (13) The enemy encouraged other peoples against America; and (14) The enemy insulted the American flag.



this study. Each of the rows represents one of the seven wars studied. By referring to the table, it is possible to ascertain readily which categories were used to describe a particular war in any given decade. To facilitate reading the table, the categories represented by the roman numerals in the table are listed at the bottom of the table. As was the case with the previous tables, this table will be referred to when necessary in the analyses which follow.

In introducing the section on categories, it was indicated that a category might appear more frequently than a particular systemic argument contained within that category. Since the arguments within a category are all quite similar, the appearance of one would be as good, argumentatively speaking, as the appearance of any other. By the mere appearance of a category, the thrust of the arguments contained within that category would have been made. It will be helpful to illustrate the pervasiveness of the categories in the same way the pervasiveness of the individual arguments was illustrated.

In order to provide a fuller picture of the pervasiveness of the categories, Table V is included. The function of Table V parallels that of Table III, and the two tables have similar designs. For purposes of analysis, it is important to know how frequently each category was used in the rhetorical discourse of the textbooks. Table V specifically illustrates the percentage of textbooks surveyed which

Table V

## Percentage of Books Containing Each Category

|     | Amer.<br>Rev. | War of<br>1812 | Mex.-<br>Amer. | Span.-<br>Amer. | World<br>War I | World<br>War II | Korean |
|-----|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------|
| I*  | 10.2**        | 91.7           | 66.7           | 98.0            | 72.3           | 14.3            | 0      |
| II  | 100           | 0              | 95.8           | 0               | 0              | 0               | 0      |
| III | 0             | 0              | 0              | 98.0            | 93.6           | 100             | 100    |
| IV  | 98.0          | 93.8           | 100            | 98.0            | 100            | 100             |        |

\*The numerals correspond to the following list of categories. Category I--There was a pro-war sympathy in the country--includes systemic arguments (1) There was widespread pressure within America to enter the war; and (12) America desired to expand her territory. Category II--The enemy made political and physical claims on America--includes systemic arguments (2) The enemy claimed sovereignty over America and her people; (3) The enemy put her troops on American soil; and (5) The enemy imposed unwanted taxes upon Americans. Category III--America is the protector of other peoples--includes systemic arguments (6) America has a tradition of safeguarding the freedom of other countries; and (7) America has a tradition of opposing inhumanity. Category IV--The enemy harmed America--includes systemic arguments (8) The enemy killed and wounded Americans; (9) The enemy violated the individual rights of Americans; (10) The enemy damaged America's trade and her right to neutrality; (11) American property was threatened, damaged, or destroyed by the enemy; (13) The enemy encouraged other peoples against America; and (14) The enemy insulted the American flag.

\*\*The figures within the table reflect the percentage of textbooks surveyed which contain each category for the particular war indicated.

utilize a given category in the discussion of a particular war. In this table, each of the columns represents one of the wars covered by the study, and each of the rows represents one of the four categories. To facilitate reading the table, each category is listed below the table and an indication is made of which systemic arguments are contained within each category. As with the other tables, this one may be referred to in the analyses which follow.

#### Movement in the Arguments

In Chapter One, it was suggested that the data gleaned from the surveyed textbooks might provide some clues as to the ways in which the rhetoric of ideology moves symbolically. Two different kinds of movement were described as useful to this study and were defined thusly: rectilinear movement occurs when arguments change; helical movement occurs when arguments recur.

There are two ways to identify rectilinear movement in this study. The first involves noting if a war was described differently across time. That is, if the arguments about that war changed, then those arguments moved rectilinearly. The second method involves noting whether the arguments about wars generally changed from war to war. That is, if every war were justified using different arguments, rectilinear movement was present across wars. Each war would not have to be treated in a unique manner, but only be described by using different arguments to indicate rectilinear movement.

Similarly, there are two ways helical movement can be identified. First, if arguments recur across periods of time for a particular war, the arguments about that war are moving helically. Although the times change and knowledge about the wars increases, the arguments remain the same, thus creating a helical pattern of movement. Second, if the same arguments recur across wars, then the arguments about war in general may be said to move helically. Again, the wars were different and were fought in different time periods. Thus, if arguments recur when discussing different wars, that recurrence is evidence of helical movement.

In order to determine whether rectilinear or helical movement occurred in the arguments gleaned from the rhetorical discourse of the high school American history textbooks surveyed, four areas need to be examined: movement in arguments across wars; movement in arguments across time of publication; the effect of wartime publication on arguments used; and the use of some arguments to explain all wars.

Movement in arguments across wars.--As might be expected, there is considerable rectilinear movement across wars. The arguments for entering wars change from war to war. But there is also helical movement across wars. Although the conditions surrounding entry vary from war to war, there is no war totally unlike any other war when viewed in terms of the arguments used to justify American entry into wars.

It is this overlapping of reasons for entry into wars that demonstrates the helical movement across wars. There is far more helical movement across wars than rectilinear movement. Arguments and categories are frequently repeated from war to war. This fact is best illustrated by Table IV. Of the four categories plotted on Table IV, only Category II--enemy made claims on America--appears in less than half of the wars, appearing in only two. Of the remaining three categories, Category III--protector of other peoples--appears in four wars, Category I--pro-war sympathy--appears in six wars, and Category IV--enemy harmed America--appears in six of the seven wars studied. Thus, although there is movement of both kinds in the arguments used to justify entry into wars, there is greater helical movement than rectilinear.

Movement in arguments across time.--The pattern of movement of arguments across time is even more one-sided than the movement across wars. Again, there is both rectilinear and helical movement across time. Across time, however, the difference between rectilinear and helical movement is even greater than the difference across wars. From the standpoint of the rhetorical function of ideology, the greater amount of helical movement is significant because of the implication that the ideology's position on the war does not have to change.



Basically, the same arguments are used across time to justify entry into a particular war. There is, however, some rectilinear movement. For example, Table IV indicates that Categories I--pro-war pressure, II--enemy made claims on America, and IV--enemy harmed America--are the main categories used to explain the American Revolution. Each of these three categories was used to explain the war in four of the five decades covered by this study. These same categories may have been used in each American history textbook since the first one was published, but that is sheer speculation and is beyond the scope of this study. In addition, however, the table indicates that during the 1960's, Category I--pro-war sympathy--ceases to be used for that purpose.

The disappearance of Category I in the 1960's suggests there is some rectilinear movement in the arguments across time for the American Revolution. A check of Table III, however, indicates that only one of the systemic arguments in that category, namely number I--widespread pressure within America--was used and that it was used in only 10.2 percent of the rhetorical documents. In addition, a further check of Table IV confirms that there is only one other instance--in World War II--of rectilinear movement across time for any of the seven wars studied. When the categories are used for analysis, then, rectilinear movement is minimal. If Table II is used for analysis, more rectilinear movement can be identified in four of the wars--the American



Revolution, the Mexican-American War, the Spanish-American War, and World War II--but that movement is insignificant due to the similarity of the changing arguments.

While there is little rectilinear movement across time, there is a great deal of helical movement. A glance at either Table II or Table IV will indicate the extent of recurrence of arguments across time. Each war is treated in virtually the same way in each of the five decades surveyed. In fact, when categories are considered, every war except the American Revolution is treated the same way throughout the five decades. It seems to make no difference that over the years a great deal more has been learned about each of the wars than was known when the first of the surveyed books was written. Once an argument is established, it seems to acquire the presumption of the status quo and continues to be used without challenge, just as the guardians of ideology would like it to be.

This helical movement is not quite as prevalent in the arguments opposed to American entry into the wars. As Table I indicates, only the Mexican-American War and World War II are treated the same way by the rhetorical discourse of the textbooks across the five decades. Although the other wars have some recurrence of arguments, there is considerably more rectilinear movement of arguments against those wars. Although the intent obviously cannot be proved, this fact seems to indicate reluctance on the part of the

textbook authors to deal with objections to the various wars. If no such reluctance were present, there would be more helical movement indicating a consistent approach on the part of most authors--similar to the consistency indicated in the treatment of the pro-war arguments. As it is, a significant number of authors fail to treat arguments opposed to the wars at all. Chapter Five will consider the treatment of arguments opposing entry into wars in more detail. Descriptively, it need only be noted at this point that there is considerably more rectilinear movement among the arguments opposing entry into wars than there is among the systemic arguments favoring American entry into the various wars.

Wartime publication did not have a significant effect on the arguments used.--Although it is generally agreed that the mood of a country is more nationalistic during a war than during peace, this nationalism does not seem to change the way established patterns of arguments are used in the textbooks surveyed. The country was engaged in war during parts of three of the five decades surveyed, but the nationalistic spirit of wartime did not seem to affect significantly the established approach to the wars, either those wars contemporary with the publication date or those fought prior to publication of the texts. It is interesting, however, that slightly fewer opposition arguments appear in the 1940's or the 1950's, both decades containing wars.

The use of some arguments to explain all wars.--Although there was no one argument which was universally applicable to all of the wars studied, it is significant that three of the four categories were used to justify more than half of the wars and that two of the categories were used to justify all but one of the wars. It is also significant to note that the war not covered by those categories is the Korean War. In the other six wars, it was argued that the enemy had harmed America in some way and that there was strong pressure within the country to enter the war. Neither of these categories could be used for the Korean War since America entered that war as a result of a unilateral decision which marked the maturing of the idea that America has become the self-proclaimed policeman of the world.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### ANALYSIS, EVALUATION, AND PROJECTIONS

- I. Assertion of Fact in Systemic Arguments
  - A. Errors of Omission
  - B. Errors of Commission
- II. Transformation of Patriotic Appeals into Systemic Arguments
- III. The Tone of the Textbooks Surveyed
  - A. Treatment of Controversy Surrounding Wars
  - B. America Is Always Right
- IV. Significance of the Symbolic Movement
- V. A Concluding Statement
  - A. Summary
  - B. Some Projections of the Study

## CHAPTER FIVE

### ANALYSIS, EVALUATION, AND PROJECTIONS

Now that the data have been described, it is necessary to proceed to the question of what it all means. The meaning and significance of the systemic arguments gleaned from the most widely used high school American history textbooks can be ascertained by focusing on four specific aspects of the systemic arguments: (1) the assertion of facts in systemic arguments; (2) the practice of transforming patriotic appeals into systemic arguments; (3) the tone of the author's presentation of the arguments; and (4) the significance of discernible symbolic movement present in the data from the textbooks.

#### Assertion of Fact in Systemic Arguments

Whatever other properties a systemic argument may have, it must, by definition, be an assertion of putative fact. The assertive nature is a necessary requisite in order that recipients of such arguments perceive that what they are reading or hearing is the truth, not just a presentation of one side of an issue. To allow the populace to perceive systemic arguments as just another collection of opinions would be to defeat the instructive purpose of the arguments. Thus, all such arguments are presented as assertions of fact.

While carrying out the rhetorical function of ideology, however, authors of the rhetorical documents used in this study often fall into errors of a rather basic nature. Such errors may or may not be serious or unethical in and of themselves. When combined, however, they virtually preclude the possibility of gaining from the textbooks an accurate understanding of America's entry into wars--which is the subject matter of the systemic arguments being studied. The results of this study indicate that history textbook authors make such errors, and the purpose of this section is to discuss the form and significance of such errors.

### Errors of Omission

In Chapter Two, it was indicated that one of the rhetorical functions of ideology is to simplify the complex social and political issues so that the populace can more easily internalize ideological positions on these issues. By wording the systemic arguments as assertions of fact, authors of the rhetorical discourse of textbooks contribute to this simplification. The simplification, however, is carried to such an extreme in the textbook setting that it creates a distorted picture of the actual causes of America's wars. The most extreme example of this practice encountered was the one book which declared simply that the American Revolution "was inevitable." While that statement was an isolated instance, virtually every surveyed book played an



active role in the ideological practice of simplifying complex reasons into systemic arguments.

One of the problems inherent in assertions is that they often lack thorough explanation or evidence. Such is the case with the systemic arguments for war in the history textbooks surveyed. For example, one book indicates that "American citizens, by virtue of their ancient traditions of democracy, naturally sympathized with a war for independence and self-government." Thus, America's tradition of safeguarding the freedom of other countries is cited as one of the main reasons for entering the Spanish-American War. Yet, there is no effort to prove the statement that America has a tradition of safeguarding the freedom of other countries. The assertion stands alone. Another book, speaking of the same war, states that the American people "turned with enthusiasm to a crusade to free an oppressed people," neglecting the rather significant role played by the "yellow press" in building and encouraging that enthusiasm. In both cases, there is little support for the assertions made, and even less development of the complex issues which surround and modify the war.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>It is not the author's memory or knowledge of American history which is being relied on to produce the statements concerning the definitive historical interpretation of the wars. Dr. John Mahon of the University of Florida Department of History supplied a list of the definitive works on each of the wars included in this study. The definitive works and the wars they treat are: (1) The American Revolution--John C. Miller, Origins of the American Revolution (Boston:

Even those books which mention the fact that the "yellow press" influenced the feelings of Americans toward the war seem to make mention of the fact almost as an afterthought. Chadwick, on the other hand, calls attention to the fact that "A great democracy, the education of whose masses usually ends with the public school, and whose library, later, is the newspaper, does not reason with a volume of international law in its hand. . . ." <sup>2</sup> Chadwick proceeds to explain the enormity of the role played by the so-called yellow press in stirring up the emotions and arousing the "prejudices and sympathies" of the American people prior to the war. Perhaps in no other war has journalistic sensationalism played such a key role in the pre-war attitude of the people; yet very little is made of this practice in most of the rhetorical documents surveyed.

Of course, the error of painting an inaccurate picture may be caused in part by the fact that textbook authors are

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Little, Brown and Company, 1943); (2) the War of 1812--Reginald Horsman, The Causes of the War of 1812 (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962); (3) the Mexican-American War--Justin H. Smith, The War With Mexico (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1919); (4) the Spanish-American War--French Ensor Chadwick, The Relations of the United States and Spain (New York: Russell & Russell, 1968); (5) World War I--Frederic L. Paxson, American Democracy and the World War: Pre-War Days, 1913-1917 (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1966); (6) World War II--Herbert Feis, The Road to Pearl Harbor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950); (7) the Korean War--John W. Spanier, American Foreign Policy Since World War II (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1960); and (8) the Vietnam War--George McTurnan Kahin and John W. Lewis, The United States in Vietnam (New York: the Dial Press, 1967).

<sup>2</sup>Chadwick, pp. 432-433.

severely limited in space available. But the problem goes beyond mere simplification to ignoring or over-simplifying significant factors surrounding the wars being discussed.

One of the prime examples of this kind of omission is that only one of the textbooks surveyed makes mention of the philosophical climate surrounding the American Revolution. During the eighteenth century, there was a global atmosphere of revolution, change, and freedom. In the colonies, according to Miller, that feeling was fed by the philosophical treatment of the Glorious Revolution in the writings of John Locke. The definitive work gives major emphasis to the mood of the times and to the philosophical currents which influenced the thinking of the American people.<sup>3</sup> Despite the ready availability of such information, most of the textbook authors seem disinterested in couching systemic arguments in the context of the times. The authors do not seem to think seriously about the possibility of improving the information content of the books while continuing to use systemic arguments to perpetuate the ideology.

From the ideological standpoint, this omission of support may be the most direct way to accomplish the purpose of teaching the students a set of systemic arguments. With no great volumes of detailed explanations, support statements, or opposing viewpoints to contend with, the students can concentrate their primary efforts on learning the systemic

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<sup>3</sup>Miller, pp. 167-197.

argument encountered in the rhetorical discourse of American history textbooks.

Of course, there is a degree of accuracy in all of the systemic arguments. The distortion of reality results, not from what is presented, but from the great amount of detail, context, and explanation which is omitted. The omitted material brings an entirely new perspective to the events being discussed. As might be expected, when compared to the fuller picture presented in the definitive works, systemic arguments standing alone do not present an entirely accurate picture of the reasons for entering wars. The omission of important details creates a simplism formed by a very careful selection of material which supports only the ideological position.

Returning again to the Spanish-American War as an example, it is true that most of the textbooks surveyed acknowledged the fact that no proof was ever found of the cause of the sinking of the Maine. But, these same books fail to deal adequately with the treatment of the Maine's sinking in the press, with the reason for the Maine's presence in Havana harbor, or with the complexities of the negotiations which had been going on between America and Spain concerning the situation in Cuba. Instead, the books simplify the incident with such explanations as: "The American battleship Maine, anchored in Havana harbor, was blown up and sunk. Believing that the Spanish had done this, many Americans clamored for

war"; "On the night of February 15, 1898, the United States battleship Maine, which had been sent to Havana harbor to protect the interests of Americans, was destroyed and two hundred and fifty of her crew were killed"; and "it [the United States] was horrified by the news that on the evening of February 15 the battleship Maine, on a friendly visit in the harbor of Havana, had been sunk by a terrific explosion, carrying two officers and 266 men to the bottom. The Spanish government immediately . . . expressed its sorrow over the 'accident' to the American warship. But the conviction that the Maine had been blown up from the outside seized on our people with uncontrollable force."<sup>4</sup> Through such simplistic treatments of the sinking of the Maine, the textbooks help to confuse rather than clarify the reasons for America's entry into the war.

Chadwick indicates that it is absurd to say that the Maine was on a "friendly" mission. If anything, the ship was in Havana harbor as a show of force, indicating to Spain that the United States was dead serious in her demands that hostilities cease in Cuba. Cuba was so close to the shore of the United States that it was felt necessary to bring hostilities to an end as soon as possible. There was also, of course, a possible threat to the vast American holdings in Cuba. America had been engaged in efforts to force Spain to recognize Cuba's independence. All of Chadwick's

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<sup>4</sup>Chadwick, pp. 293ff.



revelations indicate that the Maine was in Havana strictly on business.

The problem of oversimplification cannot be solved immediately. Neither classroom time nor textbook space allow full discussion of each war. In addition, of course, the teachers themselves are, for the most part, not fully trained to dispel the cloud of inaccuracy which prevents full understanding. Some attempt could be made on the part of textbook authors to deal more thoroughly with major contributing factors surrounding entry into wars and to direct highly motivated students to definitive sources where they could study the wars in more detail.

Fortunately, perhaps in response to criticism of textbooks, there is one area in which some progress is being made to alleviate this problem. The most contemporary textbooks read seem to be providing more detail. Not all of this detail takes the form of substantiation of systemic arguments, which are still set forth with great regularity. Nor does the added detail eradicate the simplisms which those arguments represent. But, some of the additional detail is being devoted to such things as describing some of the economic and social conditions which were contributory causes of American entry into wars.

#### Errors of Commission

There is another kind of distortion. This one results from misrepresenting the facts. Wars are admittedly,



extremely complex; and it is quite difficult to gain adequate understanding of the reasons for them without extensive study. It does the mind of even a high school student an injustice, however, when he can leave a course in American history firmly believing that the American Revolution was caused by the tyranny of George III. Such impressions are highly probable, since students are reading systemic arguments about wars rather than less slanted accounts of the wars.

Misrepresentation of fact was common in the rhetorical discourse of the textbooks. Books from every decade, for example, offer as one of the primary reasons for America's going to war with Mexico the statement borrowed from President Polk's war message that American blood had been shed on American soil.

It is true that some of General Taylor's troops were killed by Mexican soldiers, but it is not true that the men were killed on American soil. The men were killed on land which was the subject of a serious boundary dispute between the two countries. The land had been claimed, but never occupied, by Texas prior to that state's being annexed by the United States. But, the area was both claimed and occupied by Mexico, whose citizens had lived there for years. Some books mention briefly the boundary dispute, but almost all proceed to assert that American blood was shed on American soil. The land at that moment was a kind of no-man's

land, and the flat assertion that the killing took place on American land is just not true.

This kind of representation could have a counter-productive impact on students who pursue their study of history at a level of higher education. Once they ascertain the actual causal factors of the wars, they are likely to doubt the authenticity of American history they learned in high school. Of course, as the authors of textbooks are well aware, the danger is minimal, because those who pursue advanced study of American history still constitute a minority in this country.

In carrying out the situationally-unbound rhetorical function of ideology, textbook authors appear to be unwilling to present a full debate and allow the students/judges to make a decision free of pressure. Instead, textbook authors give primary emphasis to one side of the resolution and tend to take much of their evidence out of context. As assistants in the perpetuation of ideology, it is not their function to present all facts and allow a free decision on the rectitude of American entry into wars. Their function, rather, is to teach students those systemic arguments about American entry into wars which will help perpetuate the American ideology by instilling the belief that America did the right thing in every war she entered. It was demonstrated in Chapter Three that both authors and publishers of textbooks are under strong pressure to take this "patriotic"

approach to American history. Taking this approach to explaining wars is facilitated by the fact that America seems to have a tradition of rationalizing wars by appealing to ideology. Spanier indicates that "American depreciation of power and reluctance to recognize it as a factor in human affairs makes it necessary to rationalize actions [specifically, wars] in the international arena in terms of ideological objectives and universal moral principles."<sup>5</sup>

#### Transformation of Patriotic Appeals into Systemic Arguments

One of the more interesting aspects of the study grows out of the fact that segments of Presidential war messages are quoted routinely by textbook authors. It is not unusual that these important speeches should be quoted by authors of high school American history textbooks. It is, however, somewhat unusual that the quotations are used to explain American entry into wars rather than, as would be expected, just to illustrate what the President said about the wars. In the textbooks, these quotations themselves become systemic arguments for the American entry into wars.

As should be obvious, those messages are not designed primarily to serve the historical function of explaining or justifying wars. While the President may well refer to certain episodes which he feels may have contributed to the necessity of going to war, his primary purpose in composing

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<sup>5</sup>Spanier, p. 86.

such messages is at least three-fold: first, the Presidential war message is an official request that the Congress accept the President's rationale for the request and proceed to perform its own constitutional function of formally declaring the existence of a state of war; second, the message functions to inform the American people officially that a war is imminent; and third, the message is designed to elicit the support and patriotic loyalty of the American people in the upcoming struggle.

Of course, there is a fourth purpose for the speeches which may, in some cases, be very important to the President. Generally, when a President requests a declaration of war, he knows that request will be granted. He also knows his speech will be preserved for posterity and he wants that message to contribute to a good historical image of himself. Because he is neither engaged in a persuasive political effort nor asking for a judicial decision, his message is neither deliberative nor forensic. Generally, these war messages fall under the rubric of epideictic oratory.

When President Wilson declared that America was entering the World War "to make the world safe for democracy," his statement was not intended to be historically accurate. More probably, it was intended as an epideictic rallying cry designed to arouse the patriotic zeal of the American people. Similarly, when President Polk declared that American blood had been "shed on American soil," he did not intend that

statement to be used as a historically accurate description of the reasons America entered the Mexican-American War. Rather, it was intended, more likely, to arouse the patriotic indignation of the American people so that they would support his controversial war.

In spite of the fact that Presidential war messages were intended for purposes other than historical explanation of the wars, they are used as such by the textbook authors in explaining four of the seven wars covered in this study. President Madison's comments regarding the rights of Americans and the insult to the American flag are cited in 89.9 percent and 35.4 percent respectively as justifications for entering the War of 1812. President Polk's argument that American blood had been shed on American soil is used by 97.9 percent of the surveyed books to justify America's war with Mexico. McKinley's statement that he had exhausted every effort to relieve the intolerable situation in Cuba is used in 91.8 percent of the books to blame Spanish inhumanity as part of the cause of the war with Spain. Finally, it is indicated in 93.9 percent of the books--sometimes not even bothering to quote Wilson directly--that America entered World War I to make the world safe for democracy.

Three of the seven wars, on the other hand, are not justified by reference to Presidential war messages. The American Revolution--prior to which there was no President; the Second World War--which is contemporary and more



demanding of explanation; and the Korean War--which is justified as an internationally sponsored police action--are exempt from such treatment by textbook authors.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's memorable war message announcing World War II is quoted frequently, but the quotation generally is not converted into systemic arguments for entering the war. It is interesting to speculate that there are at least two reasons why his speech is not used more frequently in such a manner: first, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor which thrust America into the war is considered sufficient justification for American entry; second, it may be that the relative contemporary nature of the war assures that parents of the readers of the ideological rhetoric of textbooks have vivid memories of American entry into that war and will explain that entry to their children. Thus, it might be better to cite the war message as an epideictic rallying cry, which it definitely was, than to try to use it to justify American entry.

By tracing the use of Wilson's message for World War I, some support for the second of these two theories can be found. First, some basic information is needed. Of the textbooks surveyed from the 1920's, 87.5 percent used Wilson's statement that the world must be made safe for democracy as a systemic argument for entering the war. The percentage dropped, to 75 percent, in the 1930's, but rose to 100 percent of the books surveyed in the 1940's. There was a drop



to 83.3 percent of the books surveyed in the 1950's, but a rise back to 100 percent in the 1960's.

Of course, there are multiple possible reasons for the variation in percentage of books using the statement as a systemic argument. At least one possibility is as follows. It could be that the percentage remained relatively low in the decades immediately following the war because of close proximity to the war. The drop from the 1920's to the 1930's could be due in part to the general disillusionment which set in on the nation during the 1930's. The proximity argument would be the same as previously ventured for World War II, namely, that parents of people reading the textbooks were well aware of the more accurate reasons for the war. The rise in percentage of use during the 1940's may have been due to the nation's involvement in World War II. It might also be speculated that the drop in the 1950's was due in part to the realization brought on by cold war tensions that the world was not yet safe for democracy. Of course, even with the quasi-empirical support, this is a highly speculative argument. It is, however, plausible to use proximity to the war and cold-war tensions as explanations for the non-conversion of Roosevelt's speech into systemic arguments in the rhetorical discourse of the textbooks. It is possible to extend the speculation by indicating that textbooks might begin that conversion as time passes and conditions change.

The use of Presidential war messages as systemic arguments is, of course, closely related to the errors of oversimplification and misrepresentation of facts. It is perhaps more important than either of those, however, because of the tremendous authority appeal which accompanies any Presidential statement. The President of the United States is often thought of, after all, as the highest ranking guardian of our country's ideology. It is precisely because of his rank and the authority which accompanies his statements that a strong effort should be made, when utilizing his speeches in history textbooks, to make clear the difference between his request for a declaration of war--or speaking for posterity, or to arouse the citizenry--and the reasons which brought about the necessity for a war message. To treat these messages as historically accurate explanations of America's entry into wars is to ignore their primary functions. In an extreme example of the failure to make the distinction called for, some of the books which used Polk's war message offered no other explanation for the Mexican-American War.

#### The Tone of the Textbooks Surveyed

Beyond the ability to discern obvious discrepancies between the treatment of a war in the rhetorical discourse of textbook authors and the analysis of that same war by the definitive historians, there is a more subtle way in which the textbooks contribute to a distorted picture of reality.

This aspect concerns the tone used to transmit the various arguments to the reader. Richards explains the concept of tone by saying that "the speaker has ordinarily an attitude to his listener. He chooses or arranges his words differently . . . in automatic or deliberate recognition of his relation to them. The tone of his utterances reflects his awareness of this relation, his sense of how he stands towards those he is addressing."<sup>6</sup> This section will examine the tone of the arguments used by focusing on two factors: (1) the author's special treatment of controversial wars and (2) the impression given by the textbook authors that America is always right in her reasons for going to war.

#### Treatment of Controversy Surrounding War

The first major point to be made about the tone of the authors is that they do not seem to think arguments opposing American entry into wars deserve treatment equal to that given systemic arguments in favor of entering wars. It is granted that in any given war covered by this study--with the possible exceptions of the American Revolution and World War II (prior to Pearl Harbor)--there was much more sentiment supporting American entry into wars than opposing that entry. Even acknowledging the validity of that point, however, does not negate the fact that the authors seem to have a negative attitude toward arguments opposing American

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<sup>6</sup>I. A. Richards, Practical Criticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956), p. 182.

entry into wars. They are relatively consistent in utilizing high percentages of the systemic arguments for entering each of the wars studied. They are extremely inconsistent, however, in use of opposition arguments and relatively few of the authors even mention opposition to the various wars. Table III indicates that less than half of the surveyed books use any given argument of opposition to entry in treating any particular war. This point can best be illustrated by studying the example of the most controversial war included in the study.

Prior to the Vietnam War, it is fair to say that the Mexican-American War was the most controversial of the wars in which America has been involved. The war presents a very special problem to the author who wishes to assure students that the United States was justified in entering the war. The authors fulfill this rhetorical function of ideology by heavy reliance on the Presidential war message. The rhetorical functions and significance of Presidential war messages have already been discussed. In addition to using Polk's war message, the authors cite reasons which are likely to stir the patriotic feelings of the readers. It is, perhaps, assumed by the authors that most readers would feel any war justified which was entered because Americans had been killed. Additionally, if the authors succeed in arousing the patriotic feelings of the readers, then those readers might not be as likely to question the rectitude of American

reasons for entering the war or to question the validity of systemic arguments being used to arouse their patriotic feelings.

Three of the five systemic arguments used to justify American entry into the Mexican-American War are: The enemy put her troops on American soil; The enemy killed and wounded Americans; and American property was threatened, damaged, or destroyed by the enemy. With the emphasis on such compelling systemic arguments, the two additional arguments about pro-war pressure and desire to expand American territory are virtually lost in the shuffle. Although in this war it is imperative that the authors present the case for opposition to the war, the most frequently cited opposition argument--number (5), America should not expand her territory--appears in only 47.9 percent of the books surveyed.

### America is Always Right

The second major point to be made about the tone adopted by authors of high school American history textbooks is--whether intentionally or not--they convey the clear impression that America was always right in her rationale for entering war. Transmitting this attitude to students, of course, would be one of the goals of the situationally-unbound rhetoric of ideology. It is necessary for the young people of America to believe in the American ideology if that ideology is to be perpetuated, and one of the articles of that ideology is that America is always right. Four areas will be



discussed in this section to illustrate that the authors convey the impression that America's justification for entering wars was always right.

The authors' attitude toward the enemy.--It is perhaps natural to cast aspersions on an enemy before, during, and after a war. When America was an obvious victor, however, and could afford to be generous, such comments suggest an attempt on the part of the authors to show that America was right in undertaking the war in the first place. The authors of the rhetorical documents surveyed indicate a very negative attitude toward America's enemies in the various wars studied. In their non-oratorical form of rhetoric, the authors indicate either that America was totally justified in entering the war or that she was forced into entering the war, which is another way of saying she was justified in entering the war.

Two brief quotations from different books and about different wars will illustrate the point. In discussing the outbreak in Cuba which preceded the Spanish-American War, one author says: "In order to put down the uprising the cruel governor-general, 'Butcher' Weyler, herded the old men, the women, and the children into concentration camps. There they died like flies from starvation and disease." Another author indicates that the Revolutionary War came about not because of violations of the law or of the rights of the colonists, but "it came mainly because an ignorant and stupid



administration with slight knowledge of the American problem and no knowledge whatsoever of the American mind passed law after law which goaded the colonists to action and fanned to flame the long-smoldering resentment against the whole British colonial system."

The assertive nature of these quotations is not the issue here. Rather, these statements are two clear examples of the tone most of the textbook authors tend to adopt when talking about America's enemies. The implication of the tone is obvious in both instances. America was justified in going to war in the one case because of the cruelty to others and in the other case because of a total lack of understanding of her peculiar situation on the part of England.

Unequal treatment of opposing arguments.--This point was mentioned in the section on the treatment of controversy surrounding war, but warrants further elaboration here. In spite of the controversy surrounding the Mexican-American War, 46.1 percent of the books surveyed do not even mention opposition to that war. All but one of the other wars covered, being less controversial, had even less treatment of the opposition to American entry into wars. The one exception is the treatment of opposition to World War II, prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The point is simple. If the history textbooks are going to fulfill their educational function, they should make a thorough effort to clarify American history for the high

school students. As was indicated in Chapter Three, however, because of pressure from various sources as well as their unwary ignorance, authors often place more emphasis on the rhetorical function of ideology than on the educational function of textbooks.

Part of that misplaced emphasis results in the unequal treatment received by opposing arguments. If the interest were purely educational, the textbook authors would tend to be consistent in their treatment of opposing arguments as they are in the treatment of systemic arguments favoring entry. Tables I, II, and III illustrate that there is no consistency in the treatment of opposition arguments. Table I indicates that opposing arguments vary across time for every war. Table II, however, depicts a high degree of consistency across decades for the systemic arguments favoring entry. Finally, Table III indicates that a significantly higher percentage of books contains systemic arguments than opposing arguments. In fact, only one of the opposing arguments--the already mentioned opposition to World War II--appeared in more than 47.9 percent of the textbooks surveyed.

The unequal treatment received by opposing arguments would seem to indicate the tone adopted by the authors that America is always right. Since arguments for entering war are right and those opposing entry wrong, in the minds of supporters of the ideology, there is no reason why opposition should be given equal treatment. But only equal discussion

of both sides would facilitate fuller understanding of circumstances surrounding American entry into wars.

Opposition arguments are not systemic arguments.--The third point seems to continue the illustration of the tone of the authors. Unlike the synthesized arguments favoring American entry into each of the wars, those arguments opposing entry are not systemic arguments. They do not constitute "a justification for action(s) taken or positions held on the part of the social structure," as required by the definition of systemic arguments. Quite the contrary, the opposing arguments are statements which attack the justifications offered for entering the wars.

Systemic arguments provide an ideological rationalization for American entry into wars.--The final point to be made about the tone of the textbooks is that systemic arguments, by definition, appeal to the articles of the ideology in justifying the actions of America. One book provides a clear example of this process of appealing to ideology while discussing America's entry into World War I: "Democracy, the right of nations to decide their own fate, a pledge of enduring peace--these were the ideals for which the American people were to pour out their blood and treasure as if in a great crusade." Spanier indicates that using its ideology to rationalize actions taken in the realm of foreign policy has traditionally been a practice of the United States.

Once Americans are provoked, however, and the United States has to resort to force, the employment of this force can be justified only in terms of the universal

moral principles with which the United States, as a democratic country, identifies itself. Resort to this evil instrument, war, can be justified only by presuming noble purposes and completely destroying the immoral enemy who threatens the integrity, if not the existence, of those principles. American power must be "righteous" power; only its full exercise can ensure salvation or the absolution of sin. The national aversion to violence thus becomes transformed into a national glorification of violence, and our wars become ideological crusades to make the world safe for democracy--by democratizing it or by converting the authoritarian or totalitarian states into peaceful, democratic states and thereby banishing power politics for all time.<sup>7</sup>

The impression left by the definitive histories of America's wars is that all the wars were caused by highly complex sets of conditions and events. In carrying out the rhetorical function of ideology, however, authors of American history textbooks set forth systemic arguments which, by appealing to articles of the ideology, leave the clear impression that American entry into each war was totally justified. The ultimate conclusion to be drawn from this analysis of the tone of the textbook authors is that ideology does indeed use systemic arguments to help perpetuate itself. The ideological position on the wars is strongly set forth so that its distorted picture of reality can be internalized and perpetuated by students exposed to it.

The method used by the authors to assist in this perpetuation is really quite ingenious. No one can accuse the textbook authors of denying the basic freedom of expression to those opposing the wars or of failing to present both sides of the war issue. The tone adopted by the authors

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<sup>7</sup>Spanier, p. 10.

clearly implies, however, that reasons for entering the wars are forthright and truthful and that those opposing the wars are somehow suspect. This tone is itself another simplism. Horsman's definitive work on the War of 1812 indicates quite clearly that no one was right in that war, that the causal factors leading into the war were so complex that it would be historically inaccurate to imply that any of the involved powers were right. To a slightly lesser degree, perhaps, the same can be said about each of the wars studied. Thus, not only the content of the arguments but also the authors' tone constitute an oversimplification of the reality surrounding American entry into wars.

### Significance of the Symbolic Movement

As was described in detail in Chapter Four, the rhetoric of ideology does indeed exhibit symbolic movement across time and across the wars covered by this study. By studying the non-oratorical rhetoric of textbooks, a great deal has been learned about the nature of ideology itself. At least two generalizations about the symbolic movement detected in the rhetorical discourse of the textbooks will help clarify what is already known about the rhetoric of ideology.

First, the preponderance of helical movement exhibited in the systemic arguments for entering wars indicates the stability of the ideology on the particular issue of war. Although there is some rectilinear movement indicating minor changes in the systemic arguments across time and



across wars, there is far more recurrence than change of arguments. The implication to be drawn is clear: There is no need for the ideology to revise itself or its rationale for the wars in which the country has been involved. By developing systemic arguments which high school students have been able to internalize over long periods of time, history textbook authors have made a significant contribution to the perpetuation of ideology in American. That contribution is protected by the fact that across the years not enough pressure has developed to necessitate significant changes in systemic arguments supporting American entry into wars.

Second, it is important to note the significantly higher amount of rectilinear movement in the arguments opposing American entry into wars when compared to the systemic arguments for wars. The high degree of rectilinear movement seems to give credence to the idea that in attempting to fulfill the rhetorical function of ideology, textbook authors are locked on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, freedom of expression is an inherent part of the American ideology and would seem to demand full discussion of arguments opposing American entry into wars. On the other hand, the rectitude of American action in entering wars is also an inherent part of the ideology. Full and open discussion might cause perceptive students to call into question the veracity of systemic arguments for entering wars. Such



questioning could seriously damage the ideology's stance on wars fought by the country.

The lack of any easy solution to this problem of apparently conflicting articles of ideology seems a plausible explanation for the increased rectilinear movement among arguments opposing entry into wars when compared to those supporting entry. The desire to encourage full discussion is offset by the overriding pressure to maintain the rectitude of the ideology. The result of this balance is the awkward-seeming rectilinear movement which indicates a change in approach to dealing with opposition arguments across wars and across time. Also, as has already been discussed, the tone of the authors toward opposing arguments conveys considerable doubt about the accuracy or value of the arguments opposing American entry into wars.

As a final point, considerable pressure has been withstood, from within the ranks of historians themselves, in maintaining these patterns of movement. The revisionist historians have made a very strong effort to question the legitimacy of American entry into any war. Thus far, the ideology has weathered the storm. By the end of the period covered by this study, none of the revisionists' positions on American wars had yet managed to change or modify the ideological stance perpetuated rhetorically in the high school American history textbooks.

## A Final Statement

### Summary

The analysis of the data gleaned from the surveyed textbooks has shown that in high school American history textbooks from 1920 to 1969, an ideology has indeed utilized systemic arguments in its attempts to perpetuate itself. The analysis indicates that textbook authors make assertions of fact through systemic arguments which distort reality, sometimes by leaving out important material and other times by misrepresenting the complexities of the causes of wars as set forth by the definitive works. The epideictic war messages of Presidents are transformed into systemic arguments favoring American entry into wars. The impression is conveyed by the tone adopted by the authors of the rhetorical documents that America is always right. Finally, even the patterns of symbolic movement reflect the fact that there is a strong ideological bias in the textbooks.

Having developed the need to transcend situational and oratorical restrictions and having justified the focus of the study on arguments for and against American entry into and withdrawal from wars, the study proceeded to indicate that, knowingly or not, textbook authors help to fulfill the rhetorical function of ideology by passing on systemic arguments to high school students. Those systemic arguments rationalize America's entry into wars by appealing to lofty articles of the American ideology. Those systemic arguments

are clearly designed to make the impression on students that America is always right.

Because of laws requiring most children to remain in school until a certain age, exposure to these systemic arguments is very high. While no exact statement about the effectiveness of these arguments can ever be made, it can be observed that most of the people in the United States during the time period covered by this study had no formal education beyond high school. Thus, what they believe to be true about the wars this country has been engaged in was learned as a result of their exposure to systemic arguments about those wars and not from a detailed study of the complex reasons for each of the wars.

#### Some Projections of the Study

During the process of carrying out this study, several possibilities for future research studies presented themselves. By way of closing out the study, five of those possibilities are briefly introduced in the following section.

An immediate benefit might be derived by the field of education. In order to create more textbooks which do not give undue weight to ideological points of view, but which provide full and complete discussions of important aspects of American history, the results and methods of this study could be applied to contemporary high school American history textbooks. Such a study could determine whether systemic

arguments continue to be used by the authors to explain American entry into wars and to determine if systemic arguments are utilized in the discussions of other aspects of American history. In a world which is growing smaller daily, it should be unacceptable to tolerate an approach to history which strongly distorts the essential facts of history in order to make the parent ideology appear always to be right. Textbooks today need a more international outlook which could be encouraged by rhetorical studies of the arguments used in contemporary textbooks.

It would also be interesting to study the possible conflicts between parent and subideologies. To carry out this study, it would be necessary to compare the systemic arguments of the parent and subideologies on a particular issue across time or during the discussion of a particular issue. As discussed in Chapter Two, conflicts between parent and subideologies are possible. When one occurs, a study of the rectilinear movement in the arguments might enable the researcher to trace the patterns of symbolic movement in the rhetoric of the two groups as they move toward compromise solutions to the problem causing the conflict. Such a study, of course, would be more nearly situationally-bound than the one just completed, but the tools developed here might be used in such a study.

Third, utilizing the systemic arguments identified in this study, a rhetorical analysis might easily be performed

on Presidential war messages, in the past or, preferably, in a predictive nature for future war messages. The systemic arguments comprise a body of inventional materials which might be called on and used for the purpose of explaining or justifying entry into a war. The body of arguments has already been established in the process of teaching American history to high school students. Thus, a future President might well turn to this source for help in rallying support for some future war action. Even specific arguments can be predicted. If the foreign country is under threat of Communist takeover, the President might well use systemic argument (6), America has a tradition of safeguarding the freedom of others, as justification for entry, whether or not the takeover is accompanied by outside aggression.

That prediction must be modified, however, by the possible results of the fourth study. Opposition to the Vietnam War has been widespread and highly vocal. Because of the Vietnam War opposition, it may be impossible for any future President to rally support by appealing to the systemic arguments which have been used to rationalize American involvement in the war in Vietnam. To form a solid prediction about the possible disappearance of some systemic arguments as effective justifications of American involvement in future limited wars, a thorough study of all the systemic arguments used and discarded during the Vietnam War is needed. One set of systemic arguments was used for the original involvement



in the war. At least two other systemic arguments--American property was threatened, damaged, or destroyed by the enemy (justification for asking for the Tonkin Gulf Resolution) and the enemy killed and wounded Americans (justification for using the Commander-in-chief clause of the Constitution to protect troops in the field)--have been used in the ongoing battle on the part of Presidents to maintain support for America's war policies in Vietnam. Perhaps this study would reveal some explanation in rhetorical terms of why these and other systemic arguments lost their effectiveness and, based on that revelation, predictions could be made about how to avoid such argumentative pitfalls in the future.

Finally, there should be carried out a very thorough syntactical study of the identified systemic arguments and arguments opposing American entry into wars. While carrying out the present study, a tendency was noticed to carry the tone of authors all the way down into the actual grammatical structure of the systemic arguments and the arguments opposing American entry into wars. The synthesized systemic arguments were all very simple assertions of fact which utilized the indicative mood verbs to assist in structuring the assertive nature of the arguments. The synthesized opposition arguments were also very simple sentences but utilized both the indicative and subjunctive moods. Even the indicative mood opposition arguments, however, appeared to be elliptical for a more complex subjunctive structure.



In order to derive a precise description of the syntactical structure of the two sets of arguments, a very complete, sentence by sentence, analysis of all the individual statements in the textbooks needs to be carried out. If the observed tendency is, in fact, present in the arguments, then a highly detailed argument could be developed indicating that the syntactical structure of the arguments reflects the tone of the textbook authors. Evidence is already available from Searle, Osgood, Sebeok, and others which indicates that the meaning, or influence on meaning, of grammatical structure is perceived the same way by message source and message receiver. The study might well result in a very subtle but highly significant analysis of the way even the syntactical structure of arguments is utilized in the perpetuation of ideology through situationally-unbound rhetorical discourse.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Woodrow Wilson Leake, Jr., was born 17 May 1944 in Rome, Georgia. He began his education in the public schools of East Ridge, Tennessee, but received the bulk of his pre-college education in the public and private schools of Rome, Georgia.

In September of 1962, Mr. Leake matriculated at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. Majoring in English, Mr. Leake graduated with a B.A. from Emory in June, 1966. Beginning in September of 1968, Mr. Leake did graduate work in English and speech at Wake Forest University, the University of Alabama, and the University of Florida.

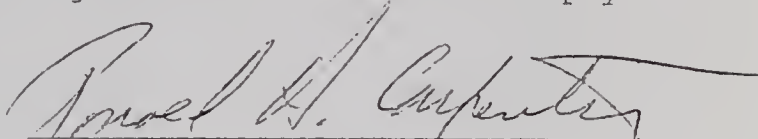
From 1966 to 1968, Mr. Leake served as the first full-time director of the Student Union at Emory. At Wake Forest, he was the assistant debate coach during the academic year 1968-1969. He served as a debate assistant at the University of Alabama during the academic year 1969-1970. Since September, 1970, Mr. Leake has been employed as a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Florida while completing the requirements for his Ph.D. degree.

In January, 1969, Mr. Leake and Susan Elizabeth Woods of Jacksonville, Florida, were married. They have no children. Mr. Leake is a member of various national and



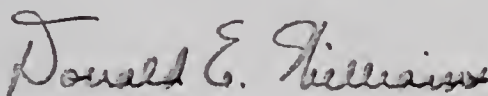
regional speech-communication associations; Omicron Delta Kappa, Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha, Pi Delta Epsilon, and Phi Kappa Phi honorary fraternities; Phi Delta Theta social fraternity; and was listed in the 1966 edition of Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Ronald H. Carpenter, Chairman  
Associate Professor of Speech

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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This dissertation was submitted to the Department of Speech in the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

December, 1973

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